THE ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1949

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Some of the Contents

COMMENTARY
Douglas Jerrold

THE ATLANTIC PACT Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, *President of the Council of Ministers of Portugal*

THE NATIONALIZATION OF INSURANCE
The Rt. Hon. Sir James Grigg, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.

THE PRESENT CHALLENGE TO ENGLISH LIBERTY Professor David Douglas, F.B.A.

ELECTIONS AND ELECTIONEERING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY Sir Charles Petrie, Bt.

AN APPRECIATION OF BALLET
Vivienne Bennett

Other important contributions by:— Clifford Bax, Seton Gordon, William Teeling, J. F. C. Fuller, Hubert Griffith, Ruby Millar, etc., etc.

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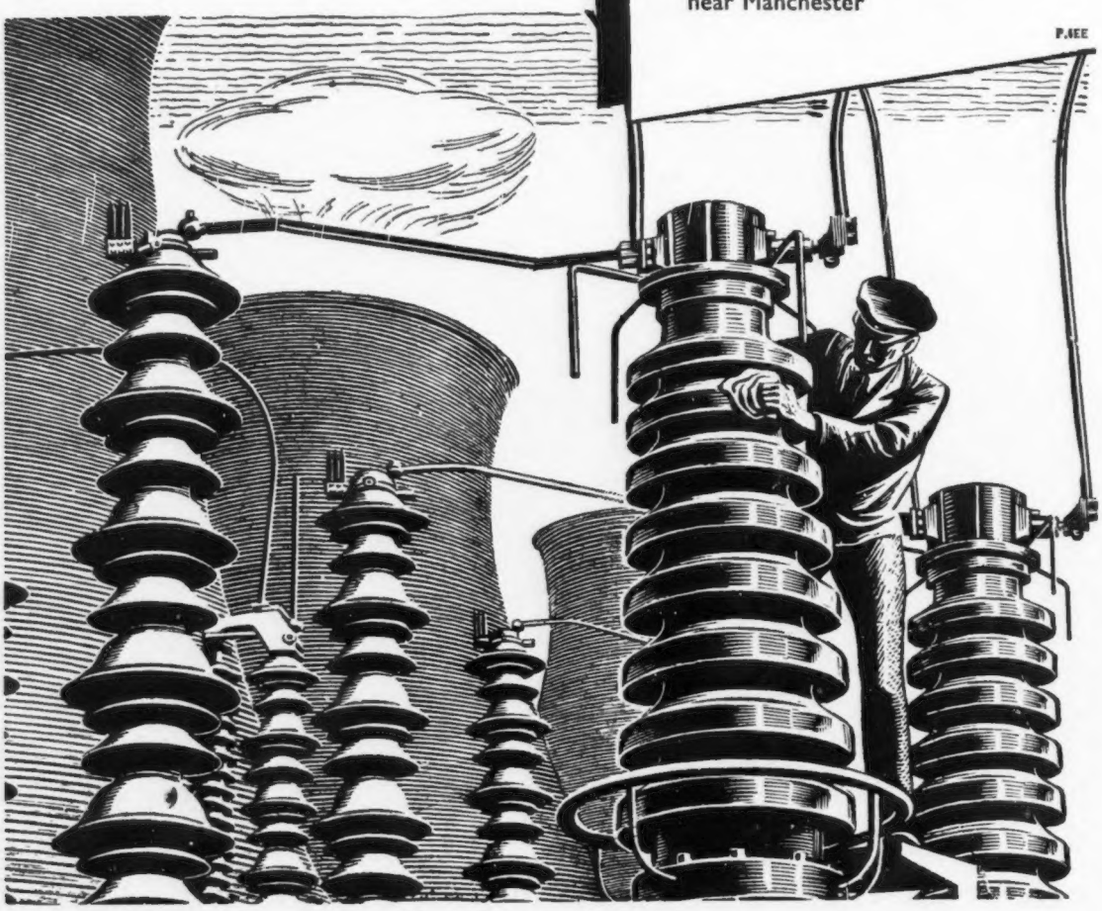

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THE ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

Edited by DOUGLAS JERROLD

CONTENTS SEPTEMBER 1949

	PAGE
COMMENTARY **Douglas Jerrold**	149
THE NATIONALIZATION OF INSURANCE **The Rt. Hon. Sir James Grigg, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.**	155
Poem—TAPESTRY **Margaret Stanley-Wrench**	164
THE PRESENT CHALLENGE TO ENGLISH LIBERTY **Professor David Douglas, F.B.A.**	165
Poem—FIESOLE **Wrey Gardiner**	170
THE ATLANTIC PACT **Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar,** *President of the Council of Ministers of Portugal*	171
Theatre—MR. SHAW *and* A FEW FILMS **Hubert Griffith**	177
AN APPRECIATION OF BALLET **Vivienne Bennett**	180
THE MAN IN THE SIDE-CAR **Helen Glendenning**	185
CARDS ON THE TABLE **Clifford Bax**	189
JOHNSON AND BOSWELL IN THE ISLE OF SKYE **Seton Gordon, C.B.E.**	193
Literature and Criticism ELECTIONS AND ELECTIONEERING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY **Sir Charles Petrie, Bt.**	200
PAX BRITANNICA **William Teeling**	204
SHORT NOTICES, NOVELS, ETC.	

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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER COMMENTARY

DR. SALAZAR, in the important pronouncement which we publish in this number of *The English Review Magazine*, asks certain fundamental questions which European statesmen must face now and not later. Our own rapidly approaching financial crisis may appear to be a more urgent matter than that of the unity and defence of Western Europe, but the two problems are essentially one. European civilization which is also, and essentially, Christian civilization, is threatened with destruction. Bismarck said that he who holds Prague is master of Europe, and the remark must be taken at the least as evidence that the threat as it exists to-day is very grave indeed. What has created this threat? Not force alone (for the aggregate of populations and resources in Christian Europe and the African dependencies is potentially far more powerful than the U.S.S.R.), but the fact that behind the armies and the secret police of the Soviets is the animating force of an idea and a faith. Confronting this idea and this faith is a moral anarchy, a political nullity and an economic chaos. The sole unifying and vivifying factor is the Atlantic Pact, and even that otherwise powerful instrument is gravely weakened by the exclusion of Spain from its ambit.

THIS exclusion of a strategically vital component of the defence of the West reflects no military ignorance of the facts but the moral confusion of the entire Western world, some part of which seeks to found a new kind of unity based on the reconciliation of Christianity and humanitarian positivism, while others seek to reconcile liberal individualism with socialist collectivism; others again attempt the even vainer task of reconciling Christianity and Communism. Thus every step towards unity tends to undermine the foundations of the structure.

History teaches no lessons, least of all to professional historians, and it is thus not surprising that no one points out how precisely the same moral disunity and political optimism undermined the League of Nations. The Geneva System led the world not to peace but to catastrophe, because, in the last resort, unity could only be achieved on the basis of a declared moral anarchy, resting on the absolute right of all members to hold what they had, to do as they liked and to behave as they would within their own boundaries.

FUNDAMENTALLY, it is the same claim, fatal to that unity which alone is strength, which underlies our own dollar crisis. While the other nations of the West are trying, some of them with great success, to re-establish liberal capitalist economies and multi-lateral trading, we are trying to build a predominantly collectivist economy and a social system based on egalitarian assumptions necessitating rationing and subsidies and therefore rigid controls both of currencies and commodities.

No one pretends that multi-lateralism and sterling convertibility can be reintroduced by

a stroke of the pen. The realities of the crisis in Anglo-American relations are, indeed, to some extent concealed by the fact that the *Economist*, the *New Statesman* and the *Wall Street Gazette*, Mr. Winston Churchill, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Snyder are all necessarily agreed that no immediate return to a free economy is possible for this country. We must, however, resist the temptation to think that, because this is so, the Anglo-American problem is essentially a technical one to be wisely left to the experts for solution, while the politicians go on quarrelling among themselves. The State Department is, it is true, not asking us to devalue sterling or to make it convertible immediately (which would involve not so much devaluation as the total collapse of our economy) but the whole American people is deeply distrustful of the sincerity with which we are pursuing what is still our nominal purpose, viz., to make sterling once again an international currency and to get back to normal international trading.

ARGUABLY, according to some strangely minded people, a world of arbitrarily valued currencies, with international trade limited to barter agreements, would be a better world, but the point to which Conservatives must address themselves is that the moral and political unity of the Western world cannot be achieved on this basis. If, therefore, Mr. Winston Churchill and Dr. Salazar are right in thinking that European unity is the condition of the survival of our civilization we must face the economic problem in the light, and under the inspiration of, that conviction.

IT is at least equally necessary to realize that the moral unity, and, therefore, the defence of the West against totalitarian aggression, cannot be achieved by a union of European socialist states. Such a union, on the most optimistic view of Socialist electoral chances in this country and on the Continent, would be confined to Great Britain, France and the Benelux countries. There is, morever, no reason at all to suppose that a year from now there will be a socialist majority in any of these territories, but that is really beside the point. What matters is that there will be no democratic socialist majority in Italy or in the Iberian peninsula or in the North American continent, and that the socialist road to moral unity is therefore closed.

The easy way out is to attempt a unity based on the somewhat jejune formulae of Parliamentary government. It is, of course, that attempt which is reflected in the exclusion of Spain even from the Atlantic Pact (although there is less than no logic and merely a lot of political sentiment in distinguishing in this matter between Spain and Portugal), and in the exclusion of Spain and Portugal alike from the Western Union organization at Strasbourg. The question which Dr. Salazar is implicity addressing both to this country and to the United States is whether the mere adherence to certain forms of government is not altogether too tenuous a basis on which to build such a revolutionary and (if it is to be successful) necessarily dynamic construction as a European union. We may force a Parliamentary constitution on Western Germany but we cannot force one on Spain or Portugal and we cannot, as the events of the last thirty years have shown all too clearly, ensure the stability of a Parliamentary régime in any Latin country, where the blood runs too hot and the logic is too cold.

CLEARLY, Dr. Salazar sees the defence of the historic values of Christian civilization as the only, and therefore the necessary, basis for any dynamic union for the economic reconstruction and military defence of the Western European and Mediterranean nations. Those who agree with him are forced to ask whether we in this country are really sincere in our desire to defend those values. Doubts on this point are felt far outside the boundaries of the Iberian peninsula.

Do we really believe in the rights of the human personality or do we regard these

rights as limited to the right to be a well-fed inmate of a public institution? Do we really think that the rights of the family are antecedent to and superior to those of the State, that all men have a right to the ownership of property, that the parents and not the local education authority must have the last word in determining what their children shall be taught and where? Finally, and most urgently, do we really believe that there is a moral law, knowable and known, which societies will ignore only at the peril of death?

THESE and some other questions of immediate importance are raised in Professor David Douglas's article in this issue.* His arguments leave no room for doubt as to the need for facing these issues. On our answer to them will certainly depend the fate of our civilization. Affairs in Europe are at crisis point, and the crisis is fundamentally moral and political, not economic. Europe can save itself only by its exertions but in the present crisis it lacks for the first time any encouraging example from the British people.

WE must not be too chary of challenging the good faith, over some of these grave matters, of our present rulers. There is no reason whatever to doubt their personal integrity but there is a point beyond which it is not consistent with intellectual integrity to pursue collectivism while claiming to seek the restoration of freedom. The argument necessarily used by democratic socialists is that such collectivist measures as they propose are necessary to the smooth running of the economic machine and are designed to protect, not to diminish, the freedom of the many. Sir James Grigg, in his article on the Nationalization of Insurance† examines the Socialist case for nationalization from this point of view and shows, we venture to think, conclusively, that the Socialist proposals have no justification except as a first step to securing complete control over the savings of the people and so to the final destruction of their economic liberties. We know by now how thoroughly bad was the case for nationalizing the railways, the electricity and gas supply undertakings and the coal mines. Labour unrest has been intensified, efficiency has not increased, output has not increased and costs have risen to the point where British coal-burning ships have to be laid up because of the cost of British bunkers. Bad, however, as the case for the specific measure of nationalization has proved to have been, the Socialist government could at least claim that all these industries were already under some form of control, that all was not well with them, and that some action was admittedly called for in regard to them. Not one of these things is true, in the same sense or measure, of industrial assurance and the social and political arguments against nationalization must be conclusive to all who are sincere in their determination to defend personal freedom.

THE *Economist* in a recent issue* had some wise words on the German situation arising out of the recent elections. We must at all costs avoid the mental and moral confusion implied by such questions as "Can we trust the Germans?" Are we talking in terms of politics or morality? Taking politics first, we must ask what kind of trust we can expect to place in them. Are we expecting to trust the Germans to work for us and our interests, or to work for their own? There is no political obligation on defeated nations to help their conquerors out of their difficulties. It is a matter of self-interest, on which the conquered nation will form, and is perfectly entitled to form, its own judgment. The political crime of the German governments of 1914 and 1939 was that they frivolously plunged the world into war in defence of policies which it was, in fact, never possible to carry through except by consent of a majority of the great powers.

* See pp. 165 - 170

† See pp. 155 - 164

* 20th August, 1949.

As for morality, the moral guilt of these governments was either that their own intentions were dishonourable or that they assumed, what they had no right to assume otherwise, that an honourable settlement of outstanding problems was impossible by peaceful means. There is, of course, an important distinction here between political and moral guilt which is relevant to the contemporary problem. A war, like a rebellion, is *politically* justifiable if it succeeds. It can never be *morally* justifiable unless, first, the end pursued is a moral one (to right a wrong or to defend the right) and, secondly, unless the end cannot be attained by other means. We have no right to expect the German people to be politically trustworthy; their political duty is to themselves, as they see their interests. On the other hand, it is abundantly clear that we cannot trust the moral sense of the German people not to tolerate a government (even if, in the case of most of the German people, it is only a case of tolerating it) which pursues immoral aims or takes a frivolous view of its moral responsibilities towards the world's peace.

THE idea that, because Dr. Schumacher calls himself a social democrat, he thinks about peace and war, and the moral problems involved, as Mr. Attlee does, is plain nonsense. The majority of Germans no doubt dislike war just as we do, but they tolerate warmongering governments through moral irresponsibility, which is born of the characteristic German fatalism. The more certainly this is the case, the more idiotic it is seen to be to determine our policies towards Germany by any consideration of trust or distrust. Only if we could trust the Germans absolutely implicitly, and on all counts, would it be a prudent gamble to "treat them rough". The only thing we can in fact do is to trust the Germans to pursue their own interests as they see them, and the only prudent policy, therefore, is to ensure that their interests shall as far as possible coincide with ours. On any other reckoning, the peculiarities of the German psychology, and the fundamental a-morality of their traditional philosophy, will ensure another war. For this reason we were right to allow the free election of a German parliament and for this reason we should admit the Germans to Strasbourg. But nothing except the creation of a strong union of Western European and Mediterranean powers will stand a chance of convincing the Germans that their interests lie with us. Any representation at Strasbourg, however, should be by the states and not through the representatives of Western Germany as a whole. If we are sincerely working for European union, founded on Christian ideas, with the correlative aim of a currency union and a customs union, the arguments for a unified Germany go entirely by the board. Much too little attention has been paid to this important point.* The one utterly fatal solution of the world problem would be the deliberate creation of a tripartite Europe with a united and centralized Germany tilting the balance between a united Western Europe and the U.S.S.R. That is the future as the devil would wish to see it, but no one else. We can try to go back to the old order, if we are so mad, but we shall certainly be destroyed before we got there. If we are going forward to the new order, the several states of Western Germany must go with us from the beginning and feel that they are an integral part from the start of a new and larger union of civilized Western States. That is a basic political necessity.

IT is in the light of this, ultimately far more important, consideration, involving the whole future of our civilization, that we must consider, and adjust our attitude to, the so-called dollar crisis about to be discussed in Washington. As Englishmen, rather than as

* Although Catholic opinion on Western Germany is fully alive to it, "We Catholics", we read in a leading Catholic Weekly, *Suso Blatt*, can only agree to the Bonn Constitution if this latter accepts the principle of federalism, self-government and parental rights and if it accepts the idea of the subsidiary functions of the federal executive.

Conservatives (although that, too, is important), let us clear our minds of one piece of nonsense. This is an economic, not a monetary problem. The dollar gap, the dollar shortage, reflects and has not created the crisis, which is a crisis of poverty, not of maladjustment. To describe it as due to a shortage of dollars is as sensible as for a man to describe his bankruptcy to a shortage of money. To blame the United States for not giving us the dollars, or rather, for not giving us enough dollars, is as sensible as for an individual bankrupt to complain that no one has given him a large enough salary. If Western Europe as a whole (and including its dependencies) cannot acquire otherwise than by charity enough dollars to pay for what it wishes to buy from dollar countries, it is too bad, but there is only one solution, and that is to buy less.

THE problem is no new one but it has arisen in an acute form as a result of two special happenings. First, we had the American loan and Marshall Aid. We have been allowed to continue living on a standard which we could not afford in the belief that we could within a period far shorter than has proved possible, regain our economic equilibrium. Secondly, and more significantly, in American eyes, many of the Marshall Aid countries, to a greater or lesser extent, have become welfare states whose governments have pledged themselves to maintain full employment and a fixed and arbitrary standard of living, irrespective of the economic position of their country. Hence, most of the governments concerned, albeit in very varying degrees, feel themselves precluded from the historic remedies for economic maladjustment, namely currency devaluation or domestic deflation. In these circumstances most Marshall Aid countries have been forced at one time or another to plead alibis. Whatever the cause of their trouble it is not, because it must not be, their domestic policies. The triumphant exception is Belgium, who started her reconstruction with a great deflation and has since by conventional policies placed herself on a hard currency basis. There are many reasons which have made this easier for Belgium than it could ever have been for us, but it is idle to suppose that these will be as fully appreciated at Washington as they are in Whitehall.

WHAT we shall no doubt plead is the decline of our rubber exports due to the Congress regulations requiring American tyre and other manufacturers to use a high proportion of synthetic rubber in their products, the subsidization of the American merchant marine and the enforced sale during the war, and in the common interests of all the Allies, of our overseas investments. There is immense force in these pleas.

To a large extent the disequilibrium as it existed in 1945 was due to causes not within our control. To a great extent, however, the cancellation of our indebtedness under lease-lend, the American loan and Marshall Aid itself must be regarded as a tangible and overwhelmingly generous acknowledgment and repayment of the debt which the American people owed to this country in 1945. We have been greatly at fault in allowing even a faint suspicion to be aroused that we regard the moral indebtedness of the United States to Great Britain as inexhaustible, and that we intend to confront our creditors with the position that they either finance us indefinitely or see the collapse of a pivotal portion of the Western defence system. As we have said before in these Commentaries, if H.M. Government are advised that the classical remedies of deflation or devaluation are inappropriate, it is their duty to initiate some alternative policy which offers at least a reasonable expectation of producing equilibrium even if at some rather distant date. It is also their clear duty to explain and to justify their policy to the world because we are incurring to-day much ill-will by our silence, not only

in the United States and Canada but also in Europe.

IT may be, of course, that, before the month is out, the Government will announce their adoption of one of the policies hitherto rejected, or of some new policy hitherto undefined, and, indeed, unguessed. If, however, they maintain, as hitherto, that the only available policy is more austerity and more American purchases of British goods regardless of price or quality or the needs of the market, it will become urgently necessary for the Conservative party to define their own attitude.

The Right Road for Britain justifiably stresses the great savings in national expenditure which can be secured by efficient administration, de-control and de-centralization, but in all human probability the situation will demand more positive measures. Vital questions of principle must be faced. The power and prosperity of the United States is ultimately due to the fact that they are a vast continental federation forming a great free trade area, united by the bond of a common currency and a common fiscal policy. Western Union opens the same opportunities to the nations of Western Europe but the basic condition is that the contracting parties shall forego their right to separate currencies and so to currency manipulation as an instrument of domestic policy. There are those, and they are the most far-sighted, who look forward to one common currency for North America and Western Union. Either policy would require, as its corollary, the free movement of peoples across the existing national frontiers within the area of the common currency. This would mean, in course of time, an end of differential standards of living and of the exploitation of the natural resources of a locality for the benefit of sectional or territorial interests. Where do we stand in these matters? Those are the questions which in the near future, certainly within the next ten years, will dominate the politics of the Western world. We must make up our minds in regard to them. One thing can be said with confidence. If there were to be a real European union to match the great American federation of the United States, this country would inevitably have to become an integral part of one union or the other.

OUR attitude to this question must largely determine our attitude to the short range dollar problem now under discussion. If we are determined to stand alone, nothing can save us from a drastic fall in our standard of living, which can only be postponed as long as sufficient Marshall Aid is available to supply us with the food and raw materials which we cannot afford to buy for ourselves. The only possible permanent solution of the so-called dollar shortage which will not involve a disastrous fall in our standard of living is a wide programme of dollar-financed development of the latent resources of Africa and Australasia and substantial dollar investments in British industry itself, but none of this will be possible so long as sterling is a British managed currency, the value of which is dependent on the eccentricities of British politicians. The choice, therefore, is fairly clear. If we wish to retain the right to paddle our own canoe hither and thither, in whatever direction may from time to time seem good to the British electorate, we must expect no outside assistance. It is a curious reflection, more satisfying to the moralist than to the taxpayer, that the political party which has taken as the sole object of its own existence, and indeed, as the only true political objective, the raising of the national standard of living, is the party which is largely responsible for the liquidation of that Empire and the abandonment of those Protectorates without which an independent British economy cannot sustain even our present standard of living.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

THE NATIONALIZATION OF INSURANCE

By SIR JAMES GRIGG *

THE proposals in the appropriately red-covered booklet "Labour Believes in Britain" relating to Insurance represent a new departure in Socialist policy in this country. Hitherto in their schemes of nationalization the Government have confined their punitive efforts to the shareholders in existing undertakings and their representatives, the directors. It is quite true that the consumers of goods produced by the expropriated concerns have been more often than not damnified by having to pay higher prices, but this has been the result of improvidence and incompetence and not of positive vice. In some of the earliest instances, for example the Bank of England, shareholders were treated with a certain appearance of fairness, but for some time now the standard pattern has been to give them in return for their holdings government securities which, though theoretically equal in capital value to the old, yield on the average only two-thirds of the former income. In other words the Government has deprived shareholders, small or large, rich or poor, of one-third of their income and for no reason other than their being shareholders. It is all very well to say that the recipients of the new stocks can sell their holdings and re-invest the proceeds in equities of the as yet unnationalized companies, but if any large number of holders sought to do this the prices of the nationalization stocks would, other things being equal, fall and those of equities rise, so that in fact it is open to no more than a very skilful and agile few to restore the income of which the Government has deprived them. In some ways it is worse than this. The Chancellor of the Exchequer obtains from Industry and from the Trade Unions gentlemen's agreements that there shall be neither increases of dividends nor large wage claims. The Trade Unions nevertheless present large claims and are commended for their moderation. Company directors with almost no exceptions keep their undertakings not to distribute more of their profits and are belaboured for making "frightfully high profits", and they are moreover threatened with legislation to enforce their gentlemen's understanding, irrespective of its fulfilment or non-fulfilment by the other parties to it, if any appreciable number of them fail to observe it voluntarily. And, what is worse, if they happen to be scheduled for nationalization their shareholders will receive in government paper only the Stock Exchange value of their shares as artificially lowered by dividend restriction. So, in future, shareholders will be robbed both in capital and income. In truth Empson and Dudley had little if anything on Sir Stafford Cripps.

Nevertheless, it is broadly true that, so far, it is only the shareholders who have been designedly damnified by the Government. Now the Government propose to go further —much further. In the case of Insurance the policy holders are of far greater importance than the shareholders and it is these, the policy holders, who are to be called upon without any option to witness the compulsory transfer of the funds which are held in trust by the Insurance Companies against their policies to the Government or to some kind of Board over which the Government has complete control. It is true that the Red Book purports to give assurances to policy holders but before

* *Sir James Grigg was Secretary of State for War from 1942 - 45.*

accepting these at their face value it would be as well to consider the intrinsic worth of even unequivocal assurances given by the present Government, and after that to examine the text of the assurances themselves to see if they are in fact unequivocal.

In November, 1945, Sir Stafford Cripps, then President of the Board of Trade, said:—

> "The Government have no intention of interfering with the transaction of insurance business by private enterprise save to the limited extent to which insurance at home may be affected by the existing proposals relating to personal social insurance and industrial injuries."

Sir Stafford repeated this pronouncement on at least one occasion, while on the 15th March, 1949, the Prime Minister gave a categorical "No" in answer to a question asking "Whether he will introduce legislation to nationalize the Insurance industry".

NOW I have no doubt that both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister could produce casuistical arguments by which they might seek to import into these stark promises implied qualifications and conditions. But I do not see how by any canons of interpretation the two taken together can be read as other than a guarantee both to insurers and insured that, during the lifetime of the present Government, and whether it extended into another Parliament or not, they could go on making their arrangements on the assumption that the Insurance business would not be interfered with. Yet we now have in the forefront of the Labour Party's programme for the next election a proposal to nationalize very nearly one-half of it. So much for the intrinsic validity of Socialist promises. In the circumstances it might be regarded as a work of supererogation to examine the specific content of any new set of promises. But I shall hope to prove that this particular set is something very special in the way of ambiguity.

Before this can be done it is necessary to try to discover exactly what it is the Government propose to do about Insurance if they are confirmed in office after the next election. If one reads the Red Bible superficially one is bound to get the idea that what the Labour Party are after is to take over Industrial Insurance only—and in order to avoid any misunderstanding it would be as well to say what is meant by Industrial Insurance. There are two kinds of insurance effected on lives, Ordinary and Industrial, and for all practical purposes the difference between them is that for Ordinary policies the premiums are remitted direct by the insured person to the insurer, while Industrial Insurance has to do with policies on which the premiums are collected by agents in the homes of the insured at frequent or fairly frequent intervals, e.g., weekly or four-weekly. Industrial Insurance, as its name implies, caters largely for weekly wage-earners and deals in small or moderate sums. Incidentally, claims in respect of Industrial policies are paid by agents in person at the homes of the insured.

Industrial Insurance has been under attack by the Labour Party for a great many years. Their views received a great fillip when Lord Beveridge included in his comprehensive scheme a recommendation for making Industrial Insurance a social service. This recommendation was expressly stated not to be an essential part of the scheme, but the Labour Party nevertheless can and do represent their present plan as the completion of vast edifice of Social Insurance which Lord Beveridge devised, and which up to the present has been paid for by the billions of dollars given or lent to us by the United States and Canada. But in fact it is a great deal more than this. The plan is to take over the whole of the concerns which do any Industrial business. This means that the State is to absorb considerably more than £1,200 millions worth of assets held against existing policies. Some of this represents cover against General Insurance (meaning policies against fire, accident, marine, etc., risks) but in the main the figure is made up of £750 millions of cover against Industrial policies and £450

An Affair of Honour

On Saturday the seventeenth day of December in the year 1825 a post chaise covered the distance between London and Birmingham, 106 miles, in less than eight hours. It was a record run. The chaise carried Bank of England Notes and Specie for Taylors and Lloyds, one of the private banks that weathered the financial storm of that year, when more than sixty banking firms suffered disaster. The integrity and foresight of the founders of Lloyds Bank gave the firm the stability on which its world-wide reputation has been built. Those qualities are still its most jealously guarded assets.

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HEAD OFFICE: *71, Lombard Street, London, E.C.3.*

millions against Ordinary Life, the latter figure representing, something like one-third of all the business of this class transacted in the United Kingdom. The argument for this device, which is very carefully skated over in the Red Bible, is that it is impossible for companies like the Prudential and the Pearl to hive off their non-industrial business, and that even the attempt to do it would create great confusion and loss. Be that as it may, what the Government are going to do, admittedly though not very openly so, is to take over the whole of Industrial Insurance, one-third of Ordinary Life Insurance and quite something of General Insurance.

IT would, however, be most unsafe to assume that this is not what a good part of the Labour Party quite deliberately intend. On form one would expect the pronouncements of the Party to be drafted in an equivocal way, purporting to represent a compromise between moderates and extremists, but offering to both groups the appearance of meaning more or less what they want it to mean—which tempts me to another digression, *viz.*, to consider what are the doctrinal elements inside the Labour Party and why it is that in any battle between them the extremists always win in the long run. Anybody who has read Professor Alexander Gray's book on *The Socialist Tradition from Moses to Lenin* can easily find in the present Labour Party in the U.K. every single kind of collectivism that has ever found public expression. Obviously the largest elements numerically are the Trade Unionists and the Co-operatives springing in this country from Francis Place and Robert Owen. It is very doubtful if the former are socialists in any strict sense whatsoever though some clever person persuaded the movement into accepting a collectivist doctrine thirty or forty years ago, and so prepared the way for a Labour Party which should be definitely committed to socialism as a dogma. In so far as they are collectivist the Trade Unions tend to favour syndicalism, which of course stresses the interests of producers and cares little or nothing for the consumers. The Co-operatives on the other hand believe in the ownership of production and distribution by associations of consumers. Then there are a few remnants of the old Kingsley-Maurice Christian Socialism, though these have almost no effect on the basic doctrines of the Labour Party. They are, however, beguiled into thinking that the egalitarian and anti-property doctrines of true socialists are merely an expression of their own desire to do good to the under-privileged and to prevent extreme inequalities in wealth. There is here a point of contact with the former Nonconformist Radicals who, with the disappearance of all hopes of office within a Liberal Party, have sought spiritual and possibly material satisfaction in the Labour Party. Then again there is undoubtedly an Anarchist element in the Party—Tolstoyans, Russellites or what you will. And there are plainly any number of Marxists and a little less plainly not a few Leninists. Incidentally, if it is asked how there can be any of these last elements in view of the manifest dislike of the Party for Stalin and *vice-versa* the answer is easy. Stalin's doctrine is neither Marxism nor Leninism; it is simply Tsarism after the mode of Peter the Great, but Slavophil rather than Westernizing. I suppose that the most fundamental difference between Marx and Lenin is that the former believed that Capitalism would decay of itself and so enable the proletariat to seize power without too much difficulty, while the latter taught that it was necessary to destroy capitalism by violence through the agency of dynamic minorities of trained revolutionaries.

Those who organize and manage the Labour Party have always been extremely skilled in keeping these different and incompatible elements together. For example, in 1931, when a few of the Labour Ministers put the call of country before that of party, the caucus succeeded in pulling away from them all but a baker's dozen of their representation in Parliament, and the dissidents preferred losing the ensuing election to the divisions

which would have been caused by the acceptance of responsibility for remedying any part of the troubles which their own shortcomings had caused. And nowadays it might fairly be said that the one thing on which all elements of the Party are agreed is the unity of the Party and that this comes before the actual content of the programme and even, if necessary, before winning a particular election. One of the consequences of this is that the extremists always have an influence far beyond their numerical weight in deciding the policy and actions of the Party. They are probably as near as we have got in this country to a minority of trained revolutionaries; they are certainly far more assiduous, unscrupulous and determined than the bulk of their fellows, and as a consequence it can be taken as axiomatic that any statement of Labour policy is bound to be such as is acceptable to the extremists, and is moreover certain, when the time comes for it to be translated into action, to be interpreted in a sense far beyond what the other elements of the Party think wise and decent.

AND now let us come back to the nationalization of Insurance. As I have already said, this particular chapter of what I suppose Mr. Bevan would call the gospel of priorities pretends to be dealing with Industrial Insurance only and to be no more than the completion of the great labours of Hercules Beveridge. It admits to some slight intrusion into the spheres of Ordinary Life and General Insurance but no more than is necessary to avoid the uneconomical splitting of existing entities. But before the moderates swallow this soothing syrup they had better look and see what the bottle contains for the palate of the extremists.

In the first place there is another chapter of the Red Bible which makes it clear that a cardinal feature of Labour policy for the immediate future is, even in the sphere which is for the present to be left mainly to private enterprise, to promote state undertakings in competition with private business. In the case of Insurance how much better then from their point of view to seize concerns which are already doing about a third of Ordinary Life Assurance and doing it extremely successfully. As a matter of fact even this device wouldn't be an unmixed success. The first result of nationalizing companies which do one-third of the Ordinary Life business would be a considerable surrender of policies, possibly counterbalanced in some degree by new policies taken out with the non-nationalized undertakings. Now if one thing is clearer than another it is that a serious diminution in the Life and General business of the State-managed concerns combined with an increase in the business of the outside companies would not be tolerated. We should get all kinds of bleats about unfair competition and it would not be long before the whole of the Insurance industry in this country would be nationalized.

ANOTHER set of considerations lead to the same conclusion. The Companies and Societies now in the tumbrils between them control (or rather are trustees for the real owners of) £1,200 millions of assets. It is no secret that members of the Labour Party talk about the unwisdom of leaving so much investment capacity in private hands, and how important for their policy of full employment and planned national development it is that the Government should get hold of the funds. The moderates are told that hitherto the funds have been invested as the Companies thought fit, and that the Government could invest them to much better advantage. The extremists know that here are £1,200 millions of solid assets with which it is possible to do a great deal of planning and other gerrymandering. They also know that here is a staff of thousands of agents who can, after nationalization be used to canvass for the Labour Party as well as for insurance business, and who could at a later stage be made to discharge even more undesirable functions in a state approaching nearer and nearer to totalitarianism. But the arguments in favour

of getting hold of £2,700 millions of assets are just 2¼ times as potent as those for getting hold of £1,200 millions and the larger transaction raises no additional question of principle. Here then is the vital point. *It's your money they want.* If they win the next election they will take over £1,200 millions of your money, and you may be quite certain that it will be only a question of time before they take over £1,500 millions more.

This brings us back to the specific form of the guarantee which the Government gives to policy holders in return for having seized the trust funds by which their policies are assured. Here it is:—

> "The people will gain. No policy holder will suffer. Labour declares categorically that it will provide that the State shall guarantee and accept complete responsibility for all existing policies."

The first sentence is meaningless. Who are the people? If by this word is meant the whole of the population, the statement is manifestly untrue. If it means the policy holders, then what is the point of the second sentence? Perhaps it means no more than the Labour Party! The third sentence cannot possibly mean other than that the State will guarantee to the existing holders of life policies the sums assured under existing contracts plus the accrued bonuses to date. It leaves the Government free to pay reduced or even no bonuses for future years. What is the point of putting this after a sentence which, if it means anything, must imply that the policy holders will be guaranteed at least as much in bonus as they would have got if the business had remained under private management? And what is the significance of making the more generous statement a mere prophecy while the guarantee is limited to something which would represent a high degree of confiscation even for the policy holders.

THERE are two possible ways in which it can be argued that nationalization will earn more benefits for the policy holders. The Red Bible makes no claim that the expropriation of the shareholders will provide an extra fund for the policy holders. The latter already get up to nine-tenths of the profits and the Government presumably intend to compensate the shareholders by giving them paper titles to about two-thirds of their former income. There can be nothing here for the policy holder. But it might be claimed that costs will be less and investment yields higher, and we had better examine both possibilities.

First, Costs. This has become one of the main grounds of attack against Industrial Insurance and it is customary to ignore the fact that for the Companies at any rate the expense ratio has been drastically reduced over the last twenty-five years, and that for these Companies the element in it which represents the extra cost of the collecting staff is not at all excessive. But what is true is that the expenses of management for an Industrial concern can only be reduced spectacularly by a very large reduction in the numbers and pay of the agents. Once upon a time the Labour Party's plan was to abolish them altogether but now they propose to retain them and what is more they give assurances, for what they are worth, that reductions of staff will only take place as vacancies occur and that the conditions of their transfer to State officialdom will be negotiated with the Trade Unions. Of course it is a little difficult to argue about a scheme of which no details are given and of which the outlines are blurred and contradictory. But, in view of the pledge of no reductions of staff at the outset, it is fair to suppose that the larger concerns at any rate will retain their identity and that they will be controlled by some sort of National Board. How then can there be anything but an increase of staff and where are the economies coming from? Moreover it is in fact only too well established that staffing standards and conditions tend to be more lavish under Government auspices and output less, and if the present agents are indeed to be an important factor in the future plans, economic and political, of the Labour Party, we must expect that their Unions

won't let the negotiators on the other side off too lightly. Apart from all this, the volume of business is bound to fall off and the cost ratio to rise accordingly. Altogether it is patent that the expenses of management cannot possibly fall and are almost certain to rise appreciably.

Next, Investment Yield. The Red Bible is pretty coy on this question. In one place it says:—

> "All policies will in the new conditions have the full backing of the credit of the State."

and in another:—

> "In the past the hard-won savings of working people have been invested as the industrial assurances companies thought fit."

THE second of these at any rate is true. The strength and reliability of the British Life Offices have been built up over the years on the basis of carefully chosen investments. The profits of a Life Office are divided between the policy holders and the shareholders, the great bulk going to the former. Their interests in the matter of profit are the same therefore, and so the Companies who in effect act as trustees, make their investments so as to give the highest return consistent with the security of the capital. No political bias is imported and the Industrial Offices have never used their investments to secure preponderant interests in particular concerns. A few of the larger among them sometimes engage in new issues or the financing of new projects. But such operations are controlled by the Capital Issues Committee and there can be no question of putting up money for purposes to which the Government object. It is of course more than likely that some of the schemes which the Insurance Companies refuse to finance would be regarded by the Government as socially or economically desirable. But the Companies are in fact trustees for the policy holders and they are entitled to consider propositions only from the strict investment point of view.

But what will happen if these vast funds are in the possession of the Government for them to invest as *they* think fit? Is it not certain that they will from time to time be used to bolster up Government stocks in a declining market and that they will be used in furtherance of what is called the National Investment Policy? Projects which the Government favour would readily secure finance and those out of favour would not secure it at all. The schemes would be favoured or frowned on for a variety of reasons—because they would increase employment in one industry or locality and discourage it in another industry or locality; because the promoter in one case was of the right political colour and not in another—or even because the Government considered that the "welfare" value of a scheme would by their odd calculus outweigh an undoubted economic loss. Even apart from the criminality of conducting social and economic experiments with money which belongs to the policy holders—and the criminality is exactly on all fours with that of an embezzling trustee—it is abundantly clear that, under the Government, less will be earned on Life Insurance Funds than is earned now under those whose life's work has been the business of investment.

If then there will be no reduction of costs but rather an increase, and if there will be a decrease of income and not an enhancement, where are the benefits of the policy holders to come from? No wonder that the Red Book is so vague and ambiguous. It is all very well to talk in general terms about "the full backing of the credit of the State". Policy holders should take note that the only specific guarantee makes it possible for the Government to repudiate any obligation to make profits in future or to distribute bonuses beyond those already earned and allocated by the Companies.

NOW let us look into the mouth of this gift horse a little more closely. Let us first remind ourselves that having taken these £1,200 millions of assets there is no reason of

faith or principle why the Government shouldn't take over the remainder of the Insurance industry and get hold of a further £1,500 millions of assets. This means that they will, after a second bite, have £2,700 millions to play (ducks and drakes) with. It will not escape notice that a substantial proportion of this represents holdings in companies quite unconnected with any projected nationalization scheme. In other words a great number of private businesses and organizations, large and small, will find that the State has suddenly become a shareholder. This is socialization with a vengeance! It may be true that, at the first take-over, the Government are unlikely to get a majority shareholding in more than a few companies. But £2,700 millions is a lot of money and the Government will be able to do what they like with it. They can sell their holdings of enterprises they don't like, and so depress their market that the businesses in question find it at the best costly and at the worst impossible to finance any desired expansions. In other cases, they can over a period buy up enough shares to secure an important if not a dominant vote. At the best they can at meetings of shareholders exercise a serious nuisance value, not on behalf of the interests of the general body of shareholders but, as *ex hypothesi* they don't like shareholders, against those interests. At the worst they will have so to speak nationalized private businesses without anybody realizing what is happening. In short the gift horse is a Trojan Horse.

I turn now to the effect of this egregious scheme on more general national interests. At the present moment our two most recalcitrant national problems are to reduce the dollar gap and to find by non-inflationary means enough money for the replacement and extension of our industrial equipment. The Insurance Companies contribute handsomely in both respects. Their average annual overseas currency earnings are £33 millions a year, and their contributions to the fund of savings available for new capital investment is of the order of £120 millions a year. It is probable that the Companies at present listed for extinction are no more than a minor contributor to the dollar earnings, but they are responsible for no less than £75 millions of the annual savings of which £45 millions is in the Industrial Funds alone. Now as I have said more than once there is no guarantee that nationalization will stop at the Priority List; indeed there is the strongest presumption that *l'appétit vient en mangeant*, until the whole cake has been gobbled. The first impact of the guillotine on Insurance would be an acceleration of surrenders of Life Policies and a hesitation to renew in the General Branches. Many of the General policies would in the first instance be renegotiated with the offices not in the Priority List. But it is quite certain that the apprehension of a second list would before long cause foreign clients to transfer their business of this class to insurers of another nationality. Thus we may reckon on the loss of a good part of our dollar earnings from Insurance.

IN the Life Offices it is possible that some of the immediate surrenders will be made up by policies taken out in Second Priority (in the executionary or Bevan sense) offices, but it is quite beyond doubt that the new business in Ordinary Life Insurance as a whole will diminish appreciably and that Industrial Insurance will in course of time largely disappear. Thus a considerable part of what may be called the institutional savings of the people is bound to vanish. The savings of this character probably amount to about £200 millions a year and of this figure £120 millions, as I have pointed out above, comes from Life Insurance. Of course £200 millions does not sound a very large figure in comparison with the total need of the country for new capital. The annual requirement for new capital is well over £1,000 millions, apart from the sums put aside year by year for depreciation. The latter are intended for replacements and not for capital extensions and they are certainly far below the amounts

which would be required at current prices to replace existing plant and machinery. The biggest source of savings at present is found in the sums businesses put to reserve out of profits. These are in excess of £500 millions but business men with one accord complain that they are inadequate, though they cannot do more with the crushing rates of taxation on profits amounting to more than 10s. in the £ on undistributed and nearly 12s. in the £ on distributed profits. Moreover if the signs of the time mean anything they are assuredly pointing to a period of reduced profits. The next source of savings is the £400 millions of taxation which Sir Stafford Cripps imposes over and above the consumption needs of the year. But this is compulsion and the sums forcibly transferred to the State are never returned; altogether it can't go on for very long. The Trade Unions and the Labour Party are very restive about it and are demanding reductions in taxation. Moreover in a number of taxes we are reaching the verge of diminishing returns owing to their disincentive effects on either production or consumption or both. Individual personal savings of the wage earners, i.e., those savings made through the National Savings movement and Savings Banks, seem to be in process of changing from approximately zero to negative and certainly those of the middle and once well-to-do classes have, owing to confiscatory taxation, been negative for a good many years past. So that the only medium for personal savings at the moment is the institutions, and of these the Insurance Companies are the dominant constituents. And yet the Government find it necessary at this time to announce a policy which cannot fail to cut seriously into these institutional savings. Of course, there is one escape from this diminution of personal thrift, *viz.*, that as soon as they have got hold of the whole Insurance Industry the Government should make a certain amount of Life Insurance compulsory and cause the premiums to be deducted from salaries and wages in the same way as National Insurance contributions. No doubt the Government would indignantly repudiate any such suggestion but their repudiations would on past experience be valueless. For whatever the moderates may say and may have included in the Party platform, it is the extremists who always win in the not very long run. Mr. Morrison may go on cooing away about the intention of the Party to leave eighty per cent of the industrial field to private enterprise. But the measures taken or adumbrated continually extend the area of control and of public ownership, and one of the biggest steps in this direction ever taken will be the nationalization of Insurance on the present two-stage plan of the Labour Party. It is all very well for Mr. Morrison to seek to bamboozle himself and the Americans who give us Marshall Aid as to where this country is going. But *we* oughtn't to be bamboozled. After all even the reputedly moderate Mr. Morrison threatens us with the perpetuation of controls, he talks of the responsibility of private enterprise to serve the public interest and he tries to hector private individuals into accepting the thesis that there is something obscene about being efficient enough to make a profit. And if the private individual saves some of the profit which he so indecently makes and turns it into a property right, he is firmly told that as against the omnicompetent State (if such a manifest oxymoron is permissible) his right does not exist.

THE truth is that, *pace* Mr. Morrison, we are already within sight of the destruction of Western Civilization inside its very citadel. The institution of property is no more, family responsibilities are being more and more transferred to the State, and there is no longer any conception of what has been known—according to taste and belief—as Divine or Natural Law. And it is no good pointing to the maintenance of the outward forms of Parliamentary democracy. Democracy has never really worked except where there is no fundamental cleavage between the rival aspirants for office. Whatever Mr. Morrison may think or say, he and his friends have

introduced such a cleavage and unless he and they or the majority of them come to their senses, the cleavage will grow and grow until all those on one side of the chasm have been destroyed, so that at last we shall have arrived at the classless or rather one class society. Now experience has shown that the one class society does not, as Marx supposed, lead to the withering away of the State and to the re-institution of Rousseau's (or Tolstoy's) idyllic state of nature. It means as in Russia totalitarianism and the extremes of inequality. The voice may be the voice of Mr. Morrison but the hand is the hand of Mr. Bevan—or perhaps that latter-day saint too is only a talking-horse and the hand belongs to one whose little finger is thicker than even the swollen loins of the Minister of Health.

TAPESTRY

NO leaf stirs in the green lit laurel grove,
Up springs the twig, its crozier scroll the fern
Holds sealed and stiff, and from its nest, the dove
Leaps without sound of wing, or brush of feather.

O here must tread the immortal unicorn
That steps, marble as a magnolia
Through this green thicket, or here, see, glints his horn,
His eye, or here the dimpled print of hooves.

Always upon the margin of a dream
He grazes, or behind the fringe of thought,
The hollow conches of desire alone
Fright him, or leaping here, these slavering hounds.

That wound the daisy with their trampling feet.
But part the laurel, bend the thick, green leaves,
You have him, and in those calm eyes learn your fate,
And on that burning horn your heart impale.

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH.

THE PRESENT CHALLENGE TO ENGLISH LIBERTY

By DAVID DOUGLAS*

NOT the least danger which threatens England to-day is that the English people may never be made aware of the true character of the decision they will soon be called to make. In the forthcoming General Election many subordinate questions will be raised and it will be the aim of many interested persons still further to darken council. But the overriding issue to be faced by Great Britain in 1950, or before, is the simple one of British liberty. And the most difficult question which the electors will have to answer concerns the price they are prepared to pay for their personal freedom.

In an interesting and presumably authoritative article which appeared in the *New Statesman* on 27th November last, the future programme of the Socialist Party was specifically discussed.

> "The 1950 programme" we were told, "unlike that of 1945, will be primarily concerned not with the institutions and the mechanics of Socialism, *but with the human relations of individuals and classes.* The task will be to translate the ideas contained in Acts of Parliament and in the planners' blue books *into terms of everyday life.* So far a Labour Government has only legislated Socialism. *During the next five years the people must begin to live it.*"

In Poland also, and in Czechoslovakia, in Hungary and Bulgaria, we have recently had occasion to watch the exploits of governments, which, no longer concerned primarily with the mechanics of Socialism have begun very effectively to deal with the human relations of individuals and classes. In the present state of England and the world he would surely be a fool who did not see in such declarations something of a threat.

It is the purpose of this article to suggess that the precision with which the aims of Socialist policy are thus defined demands an equal precision (hitherto lacking*) from those who oppose it. Marxian Socialism is a positive creed, capable, as such, of eliciting devotion and zeal from its adherents. As thirty-three by-elections have helped to show it will never be effectively countered by some pale replica of itself, or by negative criticism on points of detail. Directed towards the establishment of a totalitarian and materialistic society, it can only be withstood if it be met by the confident assertion in terms of politics of another creed which is equally positive and manifestly better.

IN no sphere of public action is the danger of ambiguity of matters of principle more evident than in that of foreign policy. During the past four years there has arisen from Russia a declared challenge to the free way of life characteristic of this country. We have reason to be grateful for the personal stand taken against that menace by our Foreign Secretary. But what is really disquieting is the obvious inability of the Socialist Party in

* Even the *Right Road for Britain* which, as a manifesto, goes further than its predecessors in this respect, is mainly concerned with a criticism of recent Socialist measures, and with plans for their detailed modification and improvement. The fact that such destructive criticism is richly deserved does not make it an adequate substitute for a positive declaration of political faith.

* *Professor David Douglas is a Fellow of the British Academy and has been Professor of History in Bristol University since* 1945.

England, so diversely constituted, to adopt an unequivocal attitude towards something which the public conscience of England recognizes as unmistakably and uncompromisingly evil. A systematic attack upon the decencies of political life will never be met by trying to construct a Socialist "bridge" between the countries of freedom and those of a Communism so deeply dyed in blood. The technique of diplomacy may well be subtle but the foundations of policy should be crystal clear. England is now no longer inevitably a Great Power. She will remain so only as long as she resolutely champions those principles of individual liberty which are the core of the inherited culture of Christian Europe.

Such championship can however, to-day, be made effective only by deliberate and substantial sacrifice. The grim fact has now to be faced that the survival of British liberty depends directly upon increased and more efficient armament for defence. It is an unwelcome truth and one which can never be made popular to a profoundly peace-loving people, among whom there is scarcely a man and scarcely a woman who does not earnestly pray that the immeasurable disaster of a war with Russia may be avoided. But the final test of statesmanship is the courage to state unpopular truths, and the final condition for the survival of a democracy lies in the ability of the people to receive them. If the present Government shrinks here from declaring the truth it becomes the paramount duty of H.M. Opposition to do so. Any compromise on this vital matter in the interests of vote-catching would be a betrayal of principle that would rightly carry with it a heavy retribution.

It would probably be unjust, and it would certainly be ungenerous, to assume that the failure of the present Government adequately to face this stark and unpleasant duty derives from lack of courage. It would be more accurate, and more disquieting, to ascribe it to divided councils. Our Thorez and Togliattis are publicly mute and certainly inglorious, but they are not silent behind closed doors. Even so their present importance can easily be exaggerated. The incubation of a Quisling is a matter of time and circumstance. More dangerous by far to-day is the mass of unin-structed thinking which, inspired by a vague benevolence can see an immediate benefit, but which is mentally and morally incapable of assessing its cost. British liberty can never be defended from external attack unless it be reverenced at home, and it is to-day no longer so reverenced by many of those in the seats of power.

There can at least be no question that the past four years have witnessed a curtailment of our personal liberties hardly to be matched in any other period of corresponding length in time of peace. The fact would hardly be disputed, and it is authoritatively justified by the allegation that the process is necessary to national efficiency. But national efficiency is not, and can never be, an end in itself. The essential question is not "is it efficient?" but, "for what purpose is it efficient?" Consequently, the most significant feature of the new administrative system of control is to be found in the manner in which (witness the debates on the Steel Bill) it is now being defended. To quote the *New Statesman* once more:

> "Under the stress of emergency a novel type of democratic planning is being evolved which, in conjunction with State ownership of the basic industries, gives to the Government nearly all the powers it requires for building a Socialist society on the basis of a mixed economy."

Here again the issue is clear for those who believe that bureaucracy is stultifying even while it remains outwardly benevolent, and who are convinced that the militant imposition of slavery over half the world will never be competently resisted by a Servile State.

THE time has surely arrived when this fundamental issue should be debated on the highest level. It would be disastrous were the next General Election to be fought about

the rival merits of this or that institutional practice, or about the comparative inefficiency of this or that administrative device. Our present policy of doles and bribes in exchange for liberty is now showing unmistakable signs of bankruptcy. It is not to be met by the offer of smaller doles and less attractive bribes. Esau we are told, exchanged his birthright for a mess of pottage. The modern Englishman is asked to barter his freedom for a plate of snoek. It is permissible to comment on this evidence of Socialist efficiency but the proper reply is not to offer less snoek. The proper reply is to insist that the barter is itself infamous and that there are some things that are not to be bought or sold.

If, however, a reassertion of principle is to be made with any chance of success, the people of this country must be convinced beyond doubt of the sincerity of those who make it. Propaganda has here already performed its obstructive work. Already a generation is growing up which has been trained to believe that the 1930's were a period of general destitution and distress, whereas in truth nine-tenths of our population were then better off than they are to-day. All Parties must, it is true, share responsibility for the shocking unemployment which was a disgrace to that decade, and which reached its peak during the administration of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, but its chief cause was economic conditions which unless we change our present policy are likely to return in a more terrible form. To place the blame on alleged Tory callousness is merely dishonest, but the effectiveness of the propaganda which has been directed to this end should not be minimized. Nor should the fact be neglected that large sections of the population have been led to the belief that Conservatism to-day stands for the conservation of great fortunes. Such charges should be squarely met and exposed. Unless the policy of those who oppose Socialism be clearly shown for what it is—a policy in favour of the ordinary Englishman, the ordinary Englishman will quite properly refuse to accept it.

THE present Government has effectively pursued a policy aimed at the abolition of private heritable wealth, and the reduction of the standard of life of the Middle Class. So be it. What, however, is more important is that the people should be made to realize how this blind passion for equality is already producing its own inevitable nemesis in the creation of a new State-sponsored oligarchy possessed of far greater powers than any favoured minority which it may have supplanted. It is not the surviving (or the new) rich; it is not the members of the waning Middle Class, who will be most at the mercy of this small bureaucratic group which, with its sickening entourage of inspectors and "contact-men", is coming to control—and to corrupt—the activities of this country. This new and highly privileged oligarchy has already acquired a vested interest in tyranny. It is the ordinary and not the privileged Englishman who will suffer most from the exercise of its powers.

It has become fashionable to dub as "reactionary" any opposition to the extravagance of the State or to the increase of its powers, and it is very necessary for all those who would resist the increasing enslavement of our times to watch that no colour be given to a charge which is so meaningless and so false. *Laissez-faire* may have been misjudged as a system of economics, but the present objective must be clearly shown as a return not to the injustices it permitted but to the self-reliance it fostered. Monopoly is no less, and probably more, deleterious to the public interest when it is held by private individuals than when it is exercised by the State. The concentration of effective wealth in a few hands in the midst of a surrounding penury is disgusting, whether the wealth be held by magnates or by commissars. The result in each case is servitude.

It is, therefore, the duty of all those who oppose the establishment of Socialism in this country to declare unmistakably not only the economic evil which they seek to redress but also the economic good which they intend to promote. They must insist that without private

property legally and unequivocably sanctioned there can be no personal liberty. But they must also insist that the widest possible distribution of such private property is the surest guarantee not only of individual freedom but also of public welfare.

THIS wide distribution of private property can moreover never be effected by the State. Doles are no substitute for ownership, and grants conceded are no proper alternative for what a man may earn for himself. The sole adequate agent for the promotion of a property-owning democracy is private thrift, and it is an essential feature of our present progress to serfdom that such thrift is no longer fostered. It is little use urging people to save more when owing to rising prices (fostered by ever-increasing wages and ever-increasing public expenditure) what you will save will in due course buy less than what you spend.

And it is little use telling a man to work harder to save more when he knows that penal taxation will rob him of most of the reward of his extra labour. There has never, in short, been a time in our history when personal thrift has been more systematically discouraged by regulations, legislation and example. In consequence the basic fact has now to be faced that a policy of security for the improvident at the expense of the industrious has created an England in which it has become worth no man's while to save either for himself or for his children.

This policy must now be combated not only in detail, but also in principle. Already for an increasing section of our population the direct connexion between work and wealth is blurred, and we are being systematically encouraged to demand shorter hours and larger wages not as a prize to be earned but as a right to be claimed. Already we are living ignominiously on the generosity of the U.S.A., and the official re-action to this situation is an unexampled riot of public spending. Let us hope that sanity may return before the patience of our friends, and our own accumulated reserves, run out, for both are nearly exhausted. Otherwise, outraged reality will assuredly, and at no very distant date, return to take a terrible revenge on a country which is unable to feed its people save by the increased marketing of its goods. It has become the bounden duty of anyone aspiring to be the representative of the English people in Parliament to state without equivocation that without more work and less expenditure large numbers of ordinary Englishmen will surely starve.

THE implications of this choice stretch moreover far beyond the domain of economics. A policy directed towards the widest possible distribution of private property based upon personal work and thrift aims at securing the ultimate independence of the ordinary Englishman not only from the State but from his private employer. A policy directed in the opposite direction entails inevitably the opposite result. A transitory affluence dependent upon doles from the State which are by no means inexhaustible, and which are in fact now almost exhausted, should offer a poor inducement to men who are in fact being led thereby to forfeit their own material prosperity and the free status of their children. The people of England are now being reduced to the position of irresponsible dependents free to spend their money on inessentials in the belief that the necessities of life will be provided for them by their masters. In cold statistics the consequences are plain to see. To-day we spend as a people nearly three times as much on tobacco and drink as on rent and rates, and England has become a paradise for the promoters of football pools. It is not surprising.

That way lies servitude. It is the badge of a slave class to regard the State to which it belongs as "they"; it is the mark of free men to regard their State as "us". But it is becoming a commonplace in certain sections of our community to view the State primarily as a source of assistance in the necessary expenditures of life. National recovery now

depends on the restoration in free men of the consciousness that they are themselves the State; that their rights within the State are joined to personal obligations towards it; that the cost of social services comes out of their own pockets; and that it is for them coldly to assess what they can themselves afford. Bread and circuses, doles and bribes mark the death of freedom. The ancient world proclaimed the lesson. The modern world of Hitler and Stalin has demonstrated its truth.

A DENIAL of personal responsibility is in fact not the least alarming symptom of our present plight. There is for instance something highly significant in the present trend of our education policy which is so systematically moulding our schools into a uniform pattern under the ever-tightening control of the Ministry of Education, and the Local Education Authorities. And there seems every reason to suppose that a major objective of Socialist policy will, during the next five years, be the final abolition of the private school. Much has been said, and much more doubtless will be said, about the educational consequences already flowing from ministerial control. Here, however, it is permissible to remember that the assumption by the State of control over the minds of little children has in all the enslaved countries of Europe been the essential prelude to the establishment of tyranny. When full allowance has been made for the benefits that can derive from organized education in a free community, there remains the inescapable fact that the most formative part in the education of every child comes in the family. It is the family which must serve as the essential basis in the education of a free people, and in self-reliant and responsible family life is to be found the truest hope for the rising generation. Parental responsibility is to-day in England being sapped, and parental responsibility is something which cannot without disaster be shifted on to the shoulders of the State.

Perhaps the greatest single menace to European civilization to-day is the existence of large populations made susceptible by literacy to new ideas but unable to discriminate among them. An educational system strictly dominated by the State is one of the chief agencies by which this field may be exploited, and there are already to hand other weapons which could at any time here be used for the further corruption of public opinion. Mass propaganda by the State in the interests of its rulers is still in its infancy in this country, but to allow our education, our radio, our taxation, to reduce us all to one dull level of mediocrity would in our present circumstances be almost a guarantee of national decadence.

THE particular developments of recent policy as evidenced in the sorry record of the past four years can be criticized in detail, but it is their interlocking totality which is, above all, sinister. For the end is now not difficult to discern. It is a population of men and women doing their work not as independent workers and craftsmen but as servants of officials whom they cannot resist. They are to be housed as tenants-at-will by the Local Authorities. Their wants are to be formulated by the very officials whose duty it is to supply them. In sickness they are to receive the benefits of a compulsory insurance on the strength of certificates issued by men who, like themselves, are the servants of the State-Employer. In health they are to be given their leisure and amusement by way of "concessions" from the State. And the State is to supervise their opinions, dispensing to them such information as it thinks fit, and controlling the education of their children.

Here, it may be suggested, is an issue which goes to the roots of things. It is of course an economic and political issue, but it is an ethical issue also. To-day it should be forcibly stated that this materialistic ant-heap of a society is something that is alien to—and incompatible with—the whole tradition of Christian civilization in which we have been reared. It ignores the fact that man does not live by bread alone. It burkes the distinction

between those things which must, and those things which must not, be rendered to Caesar. And most fundamentally of all it denies the over-riding importance of the individual soul which is the basis of the Christian ethic.

THESE things should be declared. And if they are stated with resolution there is little doubt they will elicit response. As a nation we have not yet ceased to prefer practicality to theory. We have not ceased to admire individual character more than its regimentation. We have not yet succumbed to an indifference to personal freedom or to a worship of the materialistic State. Moreover the most constructive classes in the community—all those who cherish a self-reliant pride in the work of their hands and brain—are precisely those who know they have everything to lose in the Servile State. But the appeal must be made without delay for the time for action is now very limited. And it must be made without concealing the courage needed for the answer. The price of liberty was defined in the eighteenth century as "eternal vigilance". That is still true, but the market value of the commodity has gone up with the years. The price of liberty to-day is not only vigilance; it is also sacrifice: the renunciation of some temporary and illusory benefits for the sake of the future.

A call to adventure is in short the only manifesto worthy of this country in the present crisis in our affairs. It must not be addressed to the privileged: they can look after themselves. It must not be addressed to those who cry "safety first" or "security at all costs": they may be passed by. It must be addressed above all to the young and the enterprising, to the diligent and the zealous, to the independent and the self-respecting. Now surely is the time to appeal not to sectional interests or to petty advantage, but rather once more to "the sublime instincts of an ancient people". And if the call be made with convincing sincerity there need be little fear of the answer. To think otherwise would be to belie our past. It is easy to be clever. It is better to declare a faith.

FIESOLE

THE dream darkens as the boat sinks
Beneath the green level of the flooding water,
Impossible to bale out the dead sea
Of this vision, unending desire of the night.

Impossible to return to the incontinent dream,
The beauty hidden in the dark cup of sleep,
Hidden in the steel surface of the mountain stream
Above the cities and the fading Pentecostal light.

Far over Umbria the sad swallows wheel
Like the dark souls of the unrepentant dead
Who seek no longer the blaze of midday, tired
By the bright dust of the world's ill,

But are content with sunset's lust of gold
In the wrapt hour of time's cool fingered end
By the unmoving river of wandering feet,
Looking for silence and the quiet friend.

WREY GARDINER.

THE ATLANTIC PACT

ANTONIO DE OLIVEIRA SALAZAR
President of the Council of Ministers of Portugal

(From a speech delivered by Dr. Salazar to the Portuguese National Assembly on the 29th July, proposing the ratification of the Atlantic Pact.)

I

THE late war ended with a chorus of praise for the deeds of the Western Powers—the ensuing period has been one of lamentation at their disillusionment.

It was the purpose of the war to prevent the setting up of a strong political and economic hegemony in Central Europe, and, on that account and through the implementation of a policy which we denounced as dangerous, it was decided to crush Germany. Beyond that purpose yet another was proclaimed—that of laying the foundations of an international organization, and, to that end, old ideals of the League of Nations were revived. To-day it is impossible to entertain any doubts but that both intentions have been frustrated: the mere design of German hegemony has been replaced by a strong and well-established Russian hegemony over the greater part of Europe and Asia; and this self-same hegemony, essentially opposed as it is to the equality of States and the universality of a community of free Nations, does not allow the organization to live save within such limits as serve its own purposes of influence or domination. But there is even worse.

What, after all, is victory? Victory is the clear unbalancing of forces which enables one of the sides in the struggle, so far as the relativity and the limitations inherent in the very nature of things will allow, to impose its will on the adversary. In this war, however, not only were many of the victorious countries paradoxically classed with the vanquished, but also neither the United States, nor Great Britain, nor France—to mention only the major Powers—were able to dictate to the nations against which they fought; they find themselves reduced to preventing interference by an alien will in the Western Zones of Germany. For her part, Russia imposes her will in sovereignty and exclusiveness in the North, the East, and the South-East of Europe and is opening up in Asia those great routes which may well lead to almost universal dominion. This being so, it may clearly be said that, if the glory belongs to some, the victory has in effect fallen to others.

THE war policy of the Western Powers brought the Russian armies to the heart of Europe and to the regions wherefrom the whole continent can be subjugated. Except for the strategic region defined by the Aar basin which so well characterizes the naturally strong central Swiss redoubt, all the keys to the West have been left in the hands of the potentially aggressive Slav troops. Nor can the significance of this fact be brushed aside on the ground that it is a necessity of the armed occupation: it is a strategic fact which is behind the continuous yielding of the Western Powers, which explains their weakness, and which conditions their policy. One should not speak euphemistically or foster illusions regarding the situation which has been created. In the present state of economic decay, moral exhaustion, and internal disintegration of the nations in the West, Russia could, if she were so disposed, or can, if she so wills, hurl her armies in a single thrust to the Channel and the Pyrenees.

To the superiority resulting from positional strength is added the prestige of the ideological system which the Muscovite armies take with them, as those of France bore on their

bayonets the ideas of the Revolution. Whether it is a case of a Messianic ideal, consciously incarnate in a people; whether it is a matter of creating conditions of survival for Communism by securing a sufficiently wide base to enable the clash with adverse doctrines and social organizations to be met; whether Russia has merely seen in her communism for export a valuable aid for the efficiency of her arms, irrespective of the truth of the system or of the possibility of its universal acceptance—it is not now necessary to consider. Events are everywhere occurring with undeniable similarity, as if identical programmes were being carried out. In the various Nations in which Russia is able to inspire and support changes, perhaps with the single and only partial exception of Finland, we find the political alignment, the economic integration or rather subordination, the social upheaval taking place along parallel lines. This has been achieved through the dislocation of forces and of political supports, and through trampling on the will, the morality, and the interests of the peoples. It has only been possible by means of the violent break up of the social framework, the adoption of new scales of values, the education of the populations which adopt them when support from outside is absent or weakened, and the denial of all liberty—political, religious or even civil. And the worst of it is that it would seem that Communism's resort to violence is not solely that it may impose itself but rather that it may live, thereby placing itself at the opposite pole to that of the European social order.

The West has evinced surprise that the liberation of nations should coincide so closely with the enslavement of peoples; to me it is strange that the fact should not be looked upon as the simple resultant of two factors—the exploitation of the Russian victory, on which is based the expansionist force of a social revolution. Be that as it may, it does not appear that this state of affairs, which places Western civilization in jeopardy, can be altered, at least in the near future, save by the organization of the opposing forces, both in the military and economic and in the moral fields.

These postulates have imposed the sequence of events.

II

THE agreements between Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg, foreshadowing economic developments for the future, could not be regarded as constituting anything more than a beginning of the organization of the West; and the wider grouping of those three countries with France and Great Britain to form the Western Union, even had it been possible to include the Scandinavian group and to secure the support of Italy, was clearly inadequate and lacking the means necessary to the ends in view.

The initiative of the United States and Canada in promoting the North Atlantic Pact brought the indispensable support of force to the efficiency of some such European defence system, at the same time that measures were initiated for the revival of the economy of Europe by means of direct aid from American capital and technical resources. In this the United States are guided by an understandable sense of human solidarity; by the responsibilities in the political leadership of the World which the scope of their war effort has conferred on them and which the alteration in the relative position of the Great Powers has undeniably imposed on them; and, besides, by a well-founded calculation of their own material and moral interests. If Europe, and with her, Africa, were subverted, and North America were to be faced and delimited across both oceans by the power of Russia and her allies, she would be confronted by a new Monroe doctrine applied in reverse and would, at best, have to accept a life within her own Continent, devoid of influence or external projection. The World would seem to an America so situated to be shrunken and Man painfully deprived of those attributes which North America conceives to be indispensable to the beauty and dignity of life.

It is in this light that, as it seems to me, the Atlantic Pact should be regarded, and we should see in it a probable source of other future developments. Its hesitant doctrine, the fluid character of its precepts, the imprecision of certain of its formulae, as shown by detailed examination of its text, should not be looked upon as arising from any lack of clarity in the view taken of the problems but rather from natural indecision at the outset, from the desire to avoid major internal and external reactions, or even from the fact that the constitutional machinery is unsuited to action on such a scale. But the realities are sovereign and will inevitably impose themselves at the decisive moments of Euro-American History which, to my mind, will be a common one in the coming decades.

SIDE by side with the principle of mutual aid, is it possible to discover in the Pact any ideological content as well? Undoubtedly, but in the precise terms imposed by the above considerations. The definition of that ideology in the Preamble to the Pact is manifestly an unhappy one and suffers from the emptiness or imprecision of certain formulae which, by reason of their having come to be used everywhere in the most varied sense, have become spent and unsettling. Their profound meaning is understandable, however, when applied to the realities which gave rise to them, and it is not their greatest defect that they reveal a purely negative anti-communist content rather than statements in harmony with the principles of a civilization deemed to be deserving of defence. The truth is that it would hardly have been possible to go very far in this latter direction considering that in one country some grave consequences of individualist liberalism are having to be faced, that in another attempts are being made to reconcile liberty with socialism, and that, elsewhere, so much mental energy is being wasted in the endeavour to arrive at the *identity of opposites* by reconciling Communism with Christianity.

Be that as it may, we feel ourselves to be bound by the obligations of the Pact and by its general purpose, not by pronouncements of doctrine favouring uniformity of political regimes as to the virtues of which in our own country we are sufficiently clear. All claims, in a contrary sense, which have arisen in Great Britain and the United States—and which, be it said, have been put forward by persons free from the responsibilities of government—are, in my view, attributable to ignorance of the origins of the Pact and, above all, to proper weight not being given to the circumstances or to the real problems of Western Europe.

III

THE question now arises: Can the adhesion of Portugal to the Atlantic Pact be regarded as in a certain measure a departure from our traditional foreign policy?

The Anglo-Portuguese alliance has provided the constant basis for a policy inspired by the need for that security along the sea routes which was fundamental for Britain and an essential element in the life of Portugal, both on the Continent and in the other integral parts of our Nation spread throughout the World. That same alliance has been characterized, throughout its long duration, by the fidelity of both parties to the spirit of the Treaties and by a flexibility which has enabled it to adapt itself to the vagaries of Time. It was conceived and has been applied on the basis of each side deciding as to the attitude of neutrality or belligerency to be maintained in the conflicts in which the other intervenes, and also as to the nature and scope of the assistance to be rendered. Fundamentally, and setting aside now the colonial defence to which Britain is committed, the Alliance has always functioned as a promise of mutual support in the maintenance of the freedom and security of the Atlantic.

The course thus wisely set has on several occasions been interrupted or altered by Portuguese intervention in the internal

conflicts of Europe. Whenever we have so intervened, whether of our own free will or impelled by others and by circumstances, we have harmfully deviated from our tasks overseas and have, without profit, but rather to our grave detriment and with the loss of life and riches, returned home sometimes with glory but always disillusioned by our interventions. Throughout our history, these deviations from our main course, defined as it is by the vital needs of the Portuguese people —faces to the sea, backs to the land—are not precedents to be followed but rather to be avoided as far as possible.

In considering the invitation to adhere to the Atlantic Pact, the line to be taken by the Government had accordingly to be determined in obedience to the following two-fold aspect: first, whether, in view of the initiative of the United States and of their promise of assistance, the Pact was capable, so far as we were concerned, of functioning as a reinforcement of the British alliance, in so far as this was already operative as guardian of the security of the North Atlantic; second, what risks might be run in relation to conflicts between Nations of Western Europe, or more precisely, whether such risks might be regarded as arising solely from the possibility of an attack from the East, which, if it were to materialize, would have to be regarded as being launched against all and against the principles of our culture and our civilization.

The shifting to the West, after the first Great War, of the World's political centre of gravity not only brought the United States to the forefront but also enhanced the importance and the risks to the freedom of the Atlantic, on the security of which Europe, Africa and America now depend almost exclusively. This being so, the support of the United States has become necessary to the security of the countries bordering the North Atlantic to the same extent that the various Atlantic positions have become necessary to American defence. Thus there remained only one matter for quite natural concern, having regard to the troubled times in which we live—that relating to the utilization of bases in time of peace, so resolved were we not to agree to the creation of undesirable "servitudes" on Portuguese territory. The text of the Treaty and the explanations given satisfactorily disposed of that preoccupation.

With the second aspect of the question the period of validity of the Pact is intimately connected. We could not undertake to intervene in European family quarrels which might arise from the very conditions of peace, in the establishment of which we have not to take part, or from the general political development, in the conduct of which we do not even have a voice. But it seems that no conflict is to be foreseen within the next twenty years between the signatory Powers themselves, not even one provoked by a revived Germany. Thus the only hypothetical danger against which precautions had to be taken was an eruption from the East which would bring in its train the collapse of Europe and of Western civilization. We felt that, in the imminence of so great a cataclysm we, too, should assist in averting it.

Its geographic scope being delimited, the Pact does not directly concern the defence of colonial territories, namely our own overseas territories. But the complications emerging from the difficulties encountered in those territories may present grave aspects and lead to grave consequences. So, the procedure for consultation laid down in Article 4 of the Pact could not be restricted to the defined area but had to be extended to any region where the difficulties are such as to give rise to anxiety. It will be prudent not to rely too much on the advantages of this but also not to ignore them entirely.

IV

A REFERENCE to Spain will now be appropriate, both in regard to her non-inclusion in the Pact and to the latter's possible repercussions on our Treaties with that country.

Contrary to what is thought sometimes and often said, our view of the Spanish case is not

affected by any commitments as to regimes or political solidarity, which in fact are non-existent; our position lies beyond, in the field of conciliation of the interests of the Peninsula and of their integration within the framework of European interests. It is simply that we enjoy the advantage of not being confused by emotional prejudices by which public opinion may be led astray when not in possession of the concrete data of a problem.

The common frontier, the affinity of blood, the parallel cultures, the geographical and strategical unity of the Peninsula which has perforce to be looked upon as a whole in the context of the defence of the West on a European continental land basis — these are the things which explain not only the existing agreements but also the position systematically upheld by us in relation to Spain in Europe. Others may perhaps not have our freedom of appreciation, but I dare to say that there are not to-day any European or American statesmen whom mature reflection has not led to the same conclusions.

The Portuguese-Spanish Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression of 1939, as also the Protocol which completed it in 1940, must be regarded as the basis of the relations between the two States in the Peninsula, and as such they condition to a certain extent the policy of each towards the other States. That is to say, no commitments or activities could be understood which ignored those instruments as expressing a solidarity imposed by geography and by a community of moral interests.

In the lengthy conversations with the Madrid Government which preceded our joining the Atlantic Pact it was made quite clear that the Treaty of Friendship and the Additional Protocol, between Portugal and Spain, were in principle compatible with the Atlantic Pact. So we considered and so, in due course, we declared in Washington. But to our mind it appeared equally clear that the commitments arising from the Pact, or entered into as the result of it, would at each moment have to be collated with the principles of the peninsular agreements. In point of fact, the Portuguese possibilities are variable according to the position and attitude of Spain.

In these circumstances, and as I have already said on another occasion, Spain ought to be included in the Atlantic Pact, first, in view of the geographic and strategic gap which her absence represents, secondly, by virtue of the real importance of the contribution of which she is capable, and lastly, because the practical value of Portugal's adhesion is itself affected by the question whether or no Spain is connected with the Pact, and, in the case of her not being so connected, by the policy adopted should a conflict bring the Pact into operation. The full working of a Western front against the possibility of aggression is strongly conditioned by the existence in the Iberian Peninsula of policies directed to identical ends. Through good fortune or enlightened intention, the Pact is sufficiently elastic to adapt itself to more than one situation.

These are irremovable realities in obedience to which Portugal has pressed, even at the risk of having to face the incomprehension of others, for Spain to be called to co-operate in the various international organizations concerned with the problems of Europe, and declared herself in Paris for Spain's admission to share in the benefits of the Marshall Plan as well as in the work of European economic co-operation. By reason of the same realities, we defend on all occasions the thesis favourable to the admission of that country to the Atlantic Pact, or, should there continue to be political difficulties opposing her formal adhesion, that the latter be replaced by some other arrangement. I should add that the presence of Portugal may facilitate a reasonable solution.

V

Portugal cannot be accused of racial prejudice. Indeed, one of the unanimously recognized characteristics of her colonizing work is the absence of the spirit of superiority which in practice appears in the form of

contempt for men or the violent imposition of institutions and customs. In our contact with peoples in very different stages of economic and social development we have not found it difficult to acknowledge and respect, when there was reason for it, the specific character of other civilizations and cultures. A breath of human and Christian brotherhood habitually inspired a task which down the centuries has been and is, even to-day, based rather on human fellowship, on community of sentiment and on mutual trust than on the coercive force of Power.

There is no racial prejudice, however, in the recognition of an historical fact—and that is the marked superiority of the European in the civilizing task, among all the peoples of the World. It may still be asserted of this Europe, engendered in the pain of invasion, sacrificed in intestine wars, inured to strenuous labour, stirred at each turn by avalanches of ideas and revolutions reminiscent of furious tempests, discoverer, explorer, missionary, mother of Nations—of this Europe, at once tragic and glorious, it may still be asserted that she retains the primacy in Science and in the Arts, that she applies in the highest degree the secrets of technology, preserves the instinct to perfect institutions and to sublimate culture, and is the possessor of incomparable political experience. We do not overlook what we owe to others in artistic creation, in literary splendour, in the subtlety of philosophies created and developed here and there; but it is only of Europe that it may be said that, in her urge to transplant civilization, she created, under Christian inspiration, universal values generously, freely, placed at the World's disposal. We ought, each one of us, to feel proud of being European.

It would, however, be unreasonable to shut our eyes to the crisis of Europe at the present moment: devastated, impoverished, divided, morally ruined, corroded by despair, faced by a dangerous mental bewilderment and the clear decline in the virtues in which she took shape, there are many who ask whether these are not symptoms of decadence and whether that decadence is not final: *finis Europae*

It is true that the World is more and more emancipating itself from her political tutelage and that, in the delirium of over-hasty liberations, it sometimes sets fire to the best of its heritage. It is true that regions more fertile and better endowed by nature are being opened up in other continents for the production of wealth. It is true that many have learnt the art of war and the secret of conquest, so that she does not possess the monopoly nor even the superiority of force. But it is the spirit that will continue to rule the World, and what is of moment is to know whether, resting on an adequate material basis, Europe can still claim spiritual pre-eminence.

This thought it is which must underlie the examination of so material and positive a thing as American aid, because politics in the future must be dominated by it. Europe would, in the absence of American aid, be impotent to save in this hour what remains of her moral heritage and of her liberty; reluctantly America has abandoned her isolation—offspring of her self-sufficiency — in order, whilst protecting herself, to succour and sustain Western Europe, the advance guard of her own security. No one can will the death of the old European Continent nor its abdication. The problem is whether it possesses, with Africa, material and moral reserves to enable it to recover its strength so as to pursue its historical rôle.

I shall not now deal with this point; but I have answered the question in the affirmative elsewhere with the conviction born of study and as an act of that faith with which those are to be answered who, desisting from all effort, ask, if Europe is not fated to choose between America and Russia.

Theatre

MR. SHAW *and* A FEW FILMS

HUBERT GRIFFITH

BUOYANT BILLIONS. By G. Bernard Shaw. *Festival Theatre, Malvern.*

SHOULD personal emotion—as apart from artistic emotion—play any part in criticism? Saint-Beuve and Lemaitre would have probably said that it shouldn't. Mr. Bernard Shaw would almost certainly say that it shouldn't—though his own brilliant dramatic criticisms were a mass of personal emotion, prejudice and passion.

However, I write the following, in regard to Mr. Shaw's latest play, "*Buoyant Billions*", seen at Malvern in the middle of last month, in a state of personal emotion because, like Luther, "I can do no other".

Shaw in his time has been boring. Not often, but sometimes. There are people who say that the four evenings of "*Back to Methuselah*" go on too long (I am not one of them). Mr. Esmé Percy, the producer of the present play, was the first producer to dare to stage the entire Hell-scene in "*Man and Superman*", since all others funked it on account of its motionless length. Many times as I have seen "*Major Barbara*", I have always come away with the feeling that a near-masterpiece has been ruined by the merciless spinning-out of its interminable last act.

And now what was the old man, aged ninety-three, obviously past all caring what any of us thought about him, going to do in this latest play, with the semi-idiotic title "*Buoyant Billions*", which he himself prefaces in the Malvern Festival Programme with the remark, "this is the best play I can do in my dotage"?

The brain and outlook of G.B.S. have meant so much to me over past decades—and I imagine to countless thousands of others of my generation—that I would have taken it to some extent as a personal tragedy if this latest play had been indeed a "play of dotage".

I might, as it turned out, have very well saved myself the unshed tears! The latest play is spare, concise, short (its entire playing-time is just under two hours), boundlessly amusing and stimulating, and containing two qualities that have up to now been almost entirely absent in Shaw's work—gaiety and romance. (It was Walkeley who said that "Mr. Shaw's philosophy is never gay", and this is deeply true—witty, ironic, passionately demanding a better world with a sardonic undercurrent of belief that such a thing might be possible—yes. But of gaiety in the process, hardly a trace. But the latest play is undoubtedly gay.)

Mr. Shaw makes one further programme-note that I frankly don't believe. He says that he writes—and has always written— all his plays just as his mother did her planchette-writing, never knowing what was going to come next. I am much more a believer in Whistler's profoundly revealing remark that "A work of art is finished from the beginning". The painter quite obviously saw that mysterious and haunting silhouette of the Mother Picture, or the "Miss Alexander"—or Raphael his Sistine Madonna or Michelangelo his "Creation of Adam", for that matter—in a moment of pure and instantaneous vision; and all subsequent weeks or months of brushwork on canvas or vaulting were merely the task of revealing it to our duller eyes. Similarly, I flatly refuse to believe that Mr. Shaw started on any of his major works, such as "*Man and Superman*", or the four terrific evenings of "*Back to Methuselah*" without a pretty clear notion at the back of his mind of what he was going to do with them.

For the present play, the planchette theory

is acceptable. The play is wildly inconsequential. All one can say is—what a planchette!

It starts off in London with a dialogue between an idealistic young man, who wants to set up shop as a self-appointed "world-betterer", and his rich father who thinks that he might be much better employed, but in the end gives consent. Marxism, Stalinism, Socialism and Capitalism are freely discussed between them. The scene is one of pure dialogue with almost no action at all—and there is not a moment of boredom in it. As Lord Robert Cecil wired to Scott on the Jubilee of his Editorship of the *Manchester Guardian*, "You have made righteousness readable". Mr. Shaw has made pure "discussion" an acceptable practice of our stage—when it is done by Mr. Shaw.

Items:—the Young Man speaking. "You sent me to Public School. The masters made me a Prefect. They gave me a cane to beat the boys they were too lazy to beat themselves. They called that training me to be a leader of men." Later:—"As I'm setting up as a world-betterer, I'll probably spend half my life in gaol . . ."

The scene shifts to a clearing in a Panama jungle. Miss Frances Day, star of musical-comedy, exquisite daintiness, honey-coloured hair and all, is there in a self-built hut, trying to look a slut but failing in this lamentably—the only thing she does fail in, for in a so-called "straight" part she turns out to be an actress of genuine distinction and quality. She, daughter of "Old Bill Buoyant", millionaire (who is to appear later), has retired to Panama to reconsider the world-situation, and to get away from men. She has the local reputation among the natives of being a magician, because her playing of the tenor saxophone gathers the alligators and rattle-snakes (the "'gaiters and rattlers" of so much of the dialogue) enraptured around her. The young man turns up and falls in love with her at first sight—a rare occurrence in Shaw's dramaturgy.

Interval—the play is in two short parts, not in three long acts, as one might have suspected.

Back in London, at Old Bill Buoyant's mansion in Belgrave Square. He is not a great mathematician or philosopher, he merely has the knack of working the stock-markets, "He makes money by instinct as a beaver builds dams". But he has had the curious whim of converting one of the rooms of his mansion into a Chinese temple, and all the rest of the play, purely discussions of marriage, take place there.

His families, by two marriages, turn up. The young man turns up. Miss Frances Day turns up—as she is merely alluded to in the programme as "She", I can give her no other name. Old Bill Buoyant himself turns up. It is agreed that the young couple had better marry. "You may regret it," says Old Bill Buoyant to his daughter, "but you'll regret it more if you haven't the nerve to try your luck". The romantic, though not untrue, outlook—unusual again for Shaw.

But just before this something else has occurred, and as it is the most striking phrase in the whole play I will enlarge on it.

The daughter, the "She", returning to the house, after presumably several years of absence, says, on entering the Chinese Temple, "Yes, Daddy made me sit here and be silent when I was in my restless 'teens".

Now how on earth should Mr. Shaw have hit on this phrase? How should he, who has never himself been a Stock Exchange millionaire, conceivably have divined that such a one, even out of caprice, could have built a temple to an unknown faith? How should he, who has never had a daughter, nor accepted any established religion, have known that it might be a good thing to make a daughter "in her restless 'teens", sit silent in a temple dedicated to any faith whatsoever, in order to calm her down, to get to know herself, and possibly to approach nearer, in contemplation, to Whatever Gods there be?

It is inexplicable. It is, one supposes, the capacity of genius to divine by instinct things that it can't possibly have known—just as Leonardo da Vinci announced casually one

day, as an accepted fact, that the earth goes round the sun rather than that the sun goes round the earth—many years before qualified astronomers had come round to that conclusion.

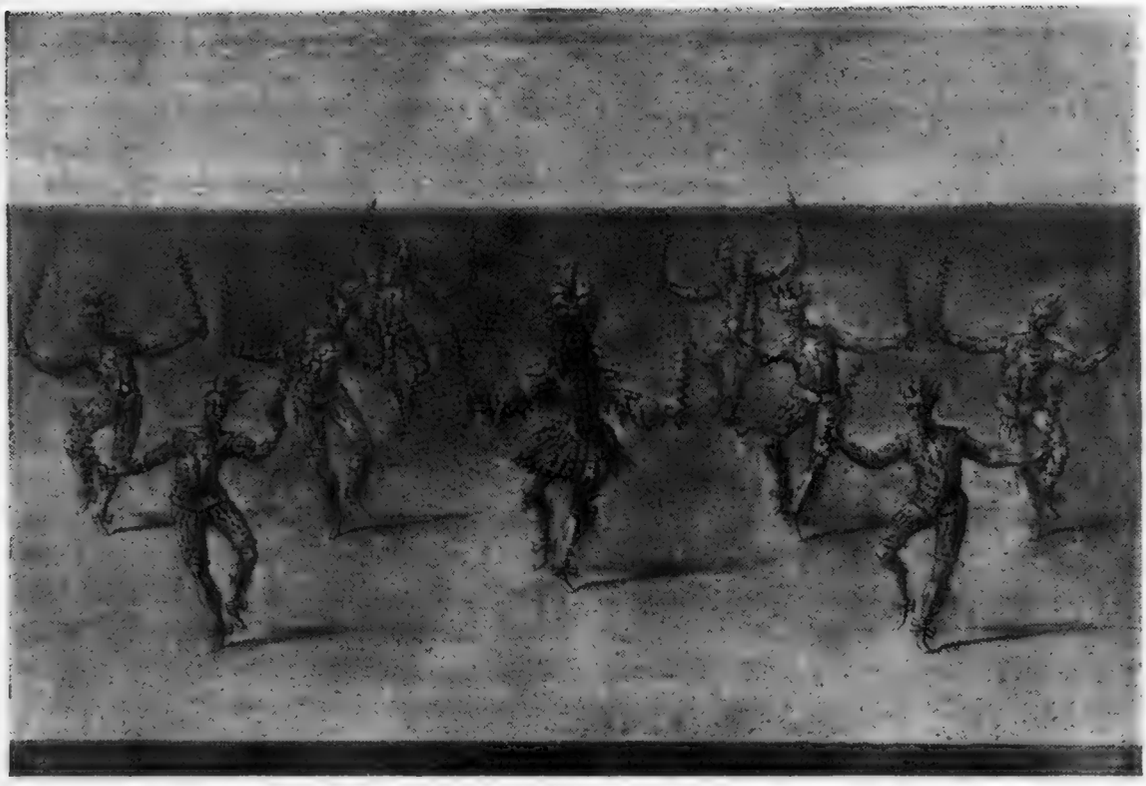
Please don't think that the play is dull, or overcharged with philosophy. It isn't. It is light and easy. It is no masterpiece, but it is certainly a "lesser work" thrown off by a master. And if it were to be his last work (which I hope it isn't; I believe there are about three other pieces in the course of construction) it could rank as his curiously gay and serene benediction to the world.

IT is at this precise season of the year that another, cruel, paper that employs me usually sends me away on holiday by telling me that I am to take over the job of its film-critic (who is away on real holiday, and right out of London altogether). It is evident that this colleague does—as the saying goes—"know his stuff." There are almost no theatrical first-nights of any importance during the month of August. Film premières, on the contrary, fall as thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa. The film companies run their films for a shorter time in London during the summer months. Consequently there has to be an augmented stream of replacements for them. Consequently I, as a sitter-in, have had to sit-in to as many as six new full-length films in two days—mornings, 10.30; afternoons, 2.30; and then, just so that we film-critics shouldn't get stale or depressed for lack of anything to do, yet another film can be slipped in for our diversion at 5.30. By the end of which it is just time to be getting along to whatever theatrical first-night occurs—ending up the day by having been continuously entertained and instructed for something like fourteen hours on end. It is an astonishing tribute to the resilience of the human brain that it can withstand it.

Luckily the theatrical enticements during that time have been almost completely negligible. "*Death of a Salesman*" (Phoenix) was, for some extraordinary reason unguessed at by god or man, hailed as a masterpiece in New York. Played by Mr. Paul Muni in London, it seemed to me pretentious and—dare I hint it?—boring drivel. "*Tobacco Road*," a seven-year run in New York, has at last been licensed by the Censor for London production and has come to the Embassy, Swiss Cottage. When I saw it in New York many years ago I was neither impressed nor shocked; and now, in a slightly softened-off version, I am again neither shocked nor impressed, but merely saddened. It represents a considerable section of the American community, the "poor-White" share-croppers of the Southern States, as being rather less articulate and intelligent than the beasts of the field, and certainly less charming.

If an Englishman had written it, it would have been howled at as an outrage. But an American wrote it—and it was accepted as a serious documentary.

I ENJOYED my period of film-going very much indeed, and hope to return to the advantages of interchangeability of critics later.



Costume of dancers in 1660, from the original in the Victoria and Albert Museum

AN APPRECIATION OF BALLET

By VIVIENNE BENNETT*

WHAT is the special enjoyment to be had from ballet? Ballet should be a marriage of the three arts of dancing (which includes mime), music and painting. Naturally, competent judges of all three fused, in solution as it were, must be rare; and it sometimes seems as if dancing is the Cinderella of the three sister arts when it comes to criticism and appreciation. Dancing is a visual pleasure, the purest, most useless, most artificial, beauty of movement; of course, people dance for pleasure or health; cripples can be helped by rhythmic gesture or dancing; factory workers can be taught to minimize fatigue by co-ordinated movement; but ballet-dancing as an art is for the delight of the spectator,—the result of generations of tradition, of years of individual hard work by the humblest participant, of fine taste and heart-break, for something briefer than Hamlet's love for Ophelia,—for "the perfume and suppliance of a minute".

Mark Perugini suggests as a simple definition, "A ballet is a series of solo or concerted dances with mimetic actions, accompanied by music and scenic accessories, all expressive of a poetic idea, or series of ideas, or a dramatic story, provided by an author or choreographer". The public who fill theatres to watch ballet are ignorant often of what they have come to see. They enjoy one or other of the ingredients, but they miss the fine pleasure

* *Miss Vivienne Bennett, trained originally as a dancer, has, apart from many West-end appearances, been leading actress at the Old Vic, at Stratford-on-Avon, and at the Open-Air Theatre, Regent's Park. She is one of the three present Directors of the Arts Theatre Club.*

of the mixture. The music must be good; a bad conductor can spoil the creation of the choreographer and even the virtuosity of the dancer while he murders the music,—that is evident. The setting, the scenery and costumes must be good—vulgar, clumsy dresses, strident colours, will make it painful for a sensitive person to look at the stage, and even great dancing should not be asked to survive these disabilities. But a fine orchestra and well-realized décor designed by a good artist do not make ballet. The third essential is dancing. There have been costly productions of ballet where the music and decorations have been perfect, but the dancing poor; the cheerful audience at some of these spectacles are like savages who gaze at the elaborate setting for a diamond when the stone has been knocked out,—they do not understand that the jewel for which the whole delicate work was designed has been lost, that there is a hole in the middle. Perhaps you think an audience happy listening to pretty music, and watching pretty people careering about more or less in time to it, is happy enough? "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,—or what's a heaven for?" as Browning says. And what is to happen to this delightful art that has come down to us, with an unbroken tradition growing richer and richer through the years, *at least* since 1661, when Louis XIV established the first *Académie Royale de la Danse*?

THERE have been many attempts to break away from this rigorous tradition. Talented artists, like Isadora Duncan and the English Margaret Morris, have obtained fame for themselves and founded schools, but the schools have been short-lived, hardly surviving (or pre-deceasing) the individuals who inspired them. How could it be otherwise? How could one dancer, even a genius, spin out of his brain in one lifetime a technique that will compete with the accumulated experience, the riches of three centuries? It is easy to theorize against this, but I think a practising dancer if he were honest would admit the inferiority of any of the new methods,—those short-cuts, those mushroom growths—even if he had begun his training in one of them. (Of course a great artist like Isadora Duncan makes her contribution by influencing the audience,—Isadora paved the way for Fokine.)

BUT to return to the marriage of the three arts;—there is no reason why musical people should not come to a performance of ballet to *hear* a work rarely performed,—or any work. During the later years of the Diaghileff ballet a section of the audience came to hear the works of young French composers to be heard nowhere else in London, and did not look at the stage. Equally there is no reason why a tone-deaf painter should not go to the ballet to *see* what Picasso or Derain can do in colour and light. But the reason for the performance, the core of ballet, is dancing, and the cream of dancing is classical, abstract.

Fine senses are required for this enjoyment. Art conceals difficulties, but if the public is so simple it forgets the difficulties triumphantly solved, it loses the vicarious delight of triumph, "these sensations like salted almonds from heaven, like pineapple smeared with saltpetre, the sharp knife and the sweetness," as H. G. Wells says of sensuality in general. The face of a ballerina expresses a calm rapture,—her apparent ease can be as exciting as the success of a matador, but not if the public forgets the bull,—the difficulty of what she is doing.

A DANCER works with his body as a violinist works with his fiddle. Physical beauty and strength are essential. A boy may have the poetry and musicality of a Milton, but if he has not an almost perfect body, he cannot be a dancer. "Give me the spirit, Master Shallow," is a relevant cry in many professions, but the spirit must be made flesh to be visible dancing. There was a ballerina who was sent every day to have her fingers grouped,—to be drilled into carrying her

hands elegantly,—by a famous *maitre de ballet* in Milan, because (to translate the brutal Italian into brutal English), she was "deficient in natural grace". A potential ballerina is rare; the director of a ballet company is willing to take endless trouble to make good deficiencies in a possible candidate, even such a terrible handicap as lack of grace. Good masters can hope to supply grace, but they cannot lengthen dumpy legs or shorten a long nose.

What shall the spectator look for to enhance his pleasure in classical dancing? There is so much detail that it is difficult to know what to point out,—well,—the glory of the male dancer is elevation,—the leap,—his rising in the air is made possible by the *plié*, the bending of the knees, the closing of a spring before he rises; watch his feet, the *heels* should touch the ground, the knees flex, and he rises, apparently superior to gravity. And after the *jeté*, the *entrechat*, after his lovely little victory, he alights silently, lightly on his own elastic legs. But his heels must touch the ground again—the stage is not pneumatic—and where does the strength come from that brings forth this sweetness? From the muscles of the thighs. There are pictures of Nijinsky reproduced in which the photographers have shaved off the high muscle above the knee—re-touched it out of sight. What nonsense this is! The public is willing to believe that Nijinsky with his almost incredible leap had feet "like a bird", that he had "an extra bone in his foot", but the development of the muscles, the indispensable medium for his art, offended their sentimental ideal of proportion. This is as silly as asking for soft graceful arms on a blacksmith.

NOTICE the carriage of the head in a *pirouette*,—if the dancer is turning to the right, the head is left behind, looking over the left shoulder, and then turns more rapidly than the body, and faces the point the eyes left at the beginning of the turn a moment in advance of the shoulders. If a dancer executes three or four *tours* the head performs this rapid guiding movement in each turn.

The carriage of the arms may have been a fortunate accident—improved through the centuries. Look at the engravings of dancers' costumes in the court ballets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,—they show stiff panniers over the hips both for men and women, high and spreading head-dresses of jewels and feathers, elaborate sleeves. These gorgeous, formal dresses dictated the placing of the arms,—they had to be held and moved slightly in front of the body; in the third position (both arms above the head) the arms frame the face,—the dancer should be able to see the inside of her hands by raising her eyes,—in the first position of the arms, (that is, both held down before the body), the arms and hands compose a circle some inches away from the waist and thighs. If the arms were held strained back from the shoulders the dancer would have brushed his costume awkwardly with his hands. How expressive the French terms of dancing are! For French is the language of dancing all over the world, —in spite of the study and subsidizing of ballet in Russia, and its renaissance under Diaghileff, there is not one Russian word in the dancer's technical vocabulary. The long nurture of dancing in Italy, especially at Milan, has not left one Italian word,—nor is there one English word. Just as Italy has given musical terms to the whole world, (presto, largo, ad libitum for instance have become, through music, Esperanto words understood in any country)—so France has supplied the language of dancing ever since a French King granted the first state-aid. So we have the just expression "*porte de bras*"—a dancer's arms never fall, or hang, they are carried.

PERHAPS it is unnecessary to say that the classical positions of the arms are not invariable — would be incorrect in much character dancing, just as they are in most national dancing, — but we see them in modern performances of *The Swan Lake*, or

Fokine's much later *Les Sylphides*, or (with brilliant modern variations) in Mr. Frederick Ashton's essentially classical Symphonic Variations.

In these notes we are more interested in the ballet-masters, the choreographers, than in the famous executants.

The greatest ballet-masters of history are Noverre (1727-1810) and Carlo Blasis (1803-1878)—both intellectuals, men of many accomplishments, both writers on the art they practised.

NOVERRE was a figure in Europe; his *Lettres sur la Danse, et sur les Ballets*, published in 1760, caused a sensation in its day, and can be read with delight now. Voltaire wrote to Noverre of this book, "I have read, Sir, your work of genius; my gratitude equals my esteem. You promise only to treat of dancing, and you shed a light on all the arts". (Voltaire may have used the word genius too easily to Frederick the Great, but there is no reason why he should flatter a ballet-master.)

It seems incredible that nearly two hundred years ago Noverre wrote, "A ballet whose plan is not felt, and appears deficient in point of exposition, incident and *dénouement*; in which the action is unintelligible without a programme or printed explanation; such a ballet, I say, will never rise in my opinion above a mere *divertissement* of dancing, more or less commendable from the manner in which it is performed . . . I readily acknowledge that, as to mechanical execution, the art has attained the highest degree of perfection . . . What I call the mechanical parts of dancing are the steps linked to each other with ease and brilliance, the *aplomb*, steadiness, activity, liveliness, and a well-directed opposition between arms and legs. When all these parts are managed without genius, when the latter does not direct these different motions, and animate them by the fire of sentiment and expression; I feel neither emotion nor concern. The dexterity of the dancer obtains my applause; I admire the automaton, but I experience no further sensation". How fresh and convincing that is; with what authority this serious artist speaks across the years, as if he had been touring the capitals of Europe and was speaking of the deficiencies, the unrealized potentialities of ballet in 1949.

Noverre's place in the dynasty of the dance is interesting—Beauchamps was appointed director of Louis XIV's Academy in 1663, his pupil was Duprés, who was director of the Academy in 1720, and Duprés taught the great Jean-Georges Noverre.

CARLO BLASIS was the author of the other outstanding classics of ballet,—*A Theoretical, Practical and Elementary Treatise on the Art of Dancing*, published in Milan, and *The Code of Terpsichore*, published in London in 1830. But these books though they are still of use to students of dancing can hardly be read for pleasure by the general public, and I do not imagine Voltaire would have written of this later author as he wrote to the matchless Noverre, "Sir, your work of genius." Blasis wrote text-books of dancing with no adequate successor until in recent years *A Manual of Classical Theatrical Dancing* was written and published by C. W. Beaumont and Idzihowsky (the Ceccetti method), which would be heavy going to the general public, though anyone who gets pleasure from watching dancers would be well advised to read the prefaces and look at the admirable drawings and diagrams. These two philosophers of the dance, Noverre and Blasis (who were also practising ballet-masters in Paris, Milan, Stuttgart or London all their long lives), can be contrasted with Gaetan Vestris, the "*Diou de la Danse*" (Diou being his own mongrel Italian and French). Noverre and Blasis took all knowledge for their province—Blasis had a library and collection valued at ten thousand pounds, the library including books in Greek, Latin, Italian, French, English, German and Spanish, and a collection of music dating from Palistrina to contemporary composers,—but

Gaetan Vestris was a star personality knowing nothing except his art, and capable of every sort of theatrical nonsense. There is a glorious story of Gaetan Vestris when his son Auguste was sent to prison for insubordination at the Paris Opera. In the eighteenth century this was an offence bordering on high treason. Father Vestris said, "Take my carriage, and ask for the cell used by my friend the King of Poland. I will meet every expense. This is the first time there has been a difference between the House of Bourbon and the House of Vestris". This son became supreme in Paris, and in his turn was called *Le Diou de la Danse*. Gaetan in his retirement said that his son possessed one advantage over himself, "He had Gaetan for his father". It was the son who made a famous retort to the Director of the Paris Opera when he was reprimanded—"Monsieur Vestris, do you know to whom you speak?" "Yes", said the dancer, "To the farmer of my talent".

Take care of your heritage, you who go to enjoy this beautiful art; watch and pray, and ponder on the beautiful old definition by the Abbé Menestrier, who wrote a history of ballet in the seventeenth century,—"Ballet is an imitation like the other arts, and that much has in common with them. The difference is, that while the other arts can only imitate certain things—as painting, which expresses the shape, colour, arrangement and disposition of things—Ballet expresses the movement which Painting and Sculpture could not express, and so can represent the nature of things and those characteristics of the soul which only can find expression by such movement. This imitation is achieved by the movements of the body, which are the interpreters of the passions and of the inmost feelings; and even as the body has various parts composing a whole and making a beautiful harmony, so one uses instruments and their accord to regulate those movements which express the effect of the passions of the soul".

Modern dancers in a classical work—*Lac des Cygnes*—Margot Fontyn and Michael Somes

Short Story

THE MAN IN THE SIDE-CAR

By HELEN GLENDENNING

NOW that I have reached middle-age I am one of those people who hope for the best but expect the worst, so that I do not think I would choose a farm on Dartmoor for an ideal holiday. Thirty years ago, I thought differently: a farm on Dartmoor seemed to me to hold out every attraction that heart could desire. Then I was delighted when I saw an advertisement which set forth every particular in glowing terms. On enquiry, a photograph of the farm was sent showing an ancient white-washed building, deeply thatched, tall chimneys, hollyhocks against the walls, old cobbled steps leading up to a buttressed front door, crooked diamond-paned windows. It looked perfect. The words which accompanied this charming picture were in keeping.

Easter was drawing near, so I begged my two cousins to make their holiday with me. They agreed with enthusiasm. I was exceedingly fond of the girls, but I confess to a slightly ulterior motive when inviting them. Mary, the elder of the two had recently been given a small Austin Seven car by my usually penurious uncle, who, having had a lucky break on the Stock Exchange, was overcome by affectionate generosity. He had a weakness for Mary. She was, I must say, pretty enough to engender a weakness in anybody.

The two girls were dying to try the little car on a long journey, so it was only a fortnight after I had made all arrangements with the farm that I found them waiting for me at my front door, the car piled with suitcases.

It was a very small car indeed, much too small I decided as I squeezed into the space left for me on the back seat. I was to be more than uncomfortable, I found. Mary's driving filled me with misgivings, and my apprehension reached fever pitch when I found the horrid little vehicle was literally running away down the long hill approaching Winchester. We stopped, after a wrangling argument, I remember, at a garage to have the brakes re-adjusted and Matilda took over the driving. She was not, perhaps, quite so pretty as Mary, but she was a much better driver. We reached the farm in the evening without further trouble.

BROOK FARM was, at first sight, even better than I had hoped. It lay at the foot of a ravine which fell away from the Moor, just below Haytor. There were birds singing in the wooded valley, a little stream flowed, bubbling and tinkling between ancient trees, primroses bloomed in clumps on the grassy banks, violets, hazel catkins, daffodils, nothing could have been more entrancing.

We drove into the courtyard of the farm between great barns, climbed up the cobbled steps and were welcomed at the door by Mr. and Mrs. Rothley. The kind voices, the smell of wood fires, lamp oil, flowers and baking bread enveloped us and drew us in. So far, so good. Being young and joyous we were able to discount the rest. The beds were hard, the rooms chilly; there was no bathroom, the sanitary arrangements were primitive. You could not possibly read in bed by candlelight, the house was full of creaks and noises, and at five o'clock in the morning such a din arose in the farmyard that thereafter sleep became impossible. The food was good, but far too rich, at least I couldn't tackle it now. No matter, we were all three well pleased.

We had arrived on Friday, and on the next day the incident occurred.

ON that Saturday morning we decided to walk over the moor to Widdicombe. It was very misty, almost dangerously so, and

we did not know the way. Mr. Rothley, weatherwise, said it would "get out" by mid-day. He said that if we took Maida the old sheep dog with us, she would lead us safely to the road which crossed the moor from Bovey Tracey to Widdicombe. We set off with Maida leading, out behind the farm, up across a field, through a gate and on to the moor itself. The mist was thick, visibility about twenty feet I judged; I felt eerie, for we moved like shadows through the white silence. Maida had been guide many times before. She led without hesitating, along the narrow green path, between brown heather and tawny bracken, across a boggy patch, up a stony rise and suddenly we found ourselves walking on the smooth road. Maida stopped on the green verge, waiting to be thanked, her task completed. We said "Thank you, Maida," as politely as we would have done to a human being, and she turned, disappearing immediately into the mist.

The road to Widdicombe looked very dull, but the mist was whiter than when we started and I felt that Mr. Rothley was probably right. It would "get out".

There was one point about the cousins they and I always laughed at the same things, so we trudged along in great good humour. The road from Haytor winds across the moor to Widdicombe, a matter of five miles. Just before it forks off there is (or was) a gate called the Hemsworthy Gate across the road set in a long stone wall which divides the moor for miles to keep the ponies from straying too far to other parts of Dartmoor. We opened the gate and went through. The turf on either side of the wall was smooth and clean. With a slight shock of surprise I saw a motor-cycle with a side-car attachment drawn up on the grass about five yards off the road. The side-car was like a sedan chair, completely enclosed with a hood and talc screen in front. The door had a side window of talc and a man was sitting inside.

We had met no one on our way. There was not a soul about. It occurred to me that it was an odd place to sit in a side-car so early in the morning, but I reflected, it was a very unpleasant time to be driving and he was probably waiting in the driest and most comfortable place until the mist dispersed. Going down the precipitous hill to Widdicombe, we all idly speculated on the man in the side-car, laughing at the various absurd reasons we thought of for his presence up there by the gate.

WE decided within an hour that Widdicombe owes most of its allure to the song. Everything was dripping wet, but the mist was lifting in white veils which slowly became blue, we began to feel warm, the sun "got out" at last. We were ravenous. There was a board up which said "Teas". The meal we sought and found was served in the garden of the cottage. It was classic in its simplicity and richness. If I ate it to-day I should die of indigestion. Ham and eggs, new bread, strawberry jam, farm butter and a bowl of clotted cream. We washed it down with strong tea and at two o'clock felt equal to toiling up the hill again to the Hemsworthy Gate.

It was now a hot day. The larks were singing, steam was rising from the shining road ahead, we took off our mackintoshes, our jerseys, our hats, and slung them about us. We were absolutely boiling when we reached the Gate and there in front of us was the side-car, still in the same place, with no living thing in sight. It was facing us as we drew near and I could see the man inside clearly through the screen. He was young, clean-shaven, with strongly marked features and his hair seemed to be reddish.

His head moved slightly as he watched us approach the Gate.

Once through the Gate. I shut it slowly in order to have a good look at the eccentric occupant of the side-car. He was not looking at me. I remarked that there was no sign of a picnic fire, no paper, no tins, no evidence of a companion, no coat or case tied on his motor-cycle. "Like Lottie Venne I am not curious but I like to know." I would have given a

good deal to know why this man was sitting securely shut up in a side-car when the sun was beating down and probably making the interior as stuffy as the Black Hole of Calcutta. Mary and Matilda were not so bitten by curiosity as I was. All the way home I kept on wondering aloud, but they refused to see anything unusual about him. He was waiting for some one they said. Mary thought he was probably an escaped convict waiting for the police. Such mild sarcasm had its effect. I dropped the subject and did not mention it again. We spent the rest of the afternoon resting and chatting to the Rothleys, kind good people. Mrs. Rothley had no children and enjoyed having a few visitors at holiday times for "company like". Mr. Rothley was a North Country man, he had married the daughter of the owner of Brook Farm. He and I had a great "crack" about the North, but somehow I did not mention our young man in the side-car.

WE had an early tea that day, refusing Devonshire cream with a slight feeling of nausea, and Matilda suggested a drive. It was a lovely evening, we did not want to leave the moor so we took the car along to the Hemsworthy Gate, intending to go on the other road which led to Hound Tor. I got out to open the Gate. The side-car was still there in exactly the same place. The sun made a long shadow on the grass. There was a pony cropping the turf not far away. The man was inside, the door was shut, the talc screens closely drawn. He watched me get into the car and I confess I had a crawling feeling down my spine. We drove through the Gate and turned down the hill to the right.

"I really can't bear it," I said to Mary. "What on earth *can* he be doing sitting in that suffocating affair?"

"He's waiting for the police to find him," Mary replied. "I told you, he's an escaped convict."

"Don't be so idiotic, that's no explanation." I was almost irritated.

"Well, any way it isn't our business," said Matilda, "and we can't do anything even if we knew what to do. You can't go up to a perfect stranger and say 'Hi! what are you doing there?' Do leave it alone, there's a dear".

I said no more. We drove on, past Jane's Grave, that pathetic little mound at the side of the road. There were fresh flowers on it. I heard her sad tale later. I have been back there many times since, and never failed to find flowers on her grave. It is said no one ever sees anyone putting the flowers there, but they are always fresh and sweet even if it is only a sprig of gorse. We climbed up to Hound Tor and scrambled about until dusk. It was about seven o'clock when we once more approached the Hemsworthy Gate. The moor was very quiet, dark and lonely. The last lark had dropped from the sky and had gone to bed; the stars were shining faintly in the warm blue. It was a delicious evening. The man in the side-car was still there by the gate; and as far as I could see he looked as if he might stay there all night. We drove home quickly. I was bursting to tell Mr. Rothley, but the girls said, "No, what's the point?" So I kept silent with an effort.

NEXT morning was a perfect Sunday, Church at Widdicombe we decided. We set off in the car about half-past ten along the now familiar road. Another car was in front of us, the Gate was left open. We drove through without having to get out. I could hardly wait to see the other side of the wall. Sure enough our friend was there. Had he been there all night? If he had left the moor he had returned to the identical spot. Why? Why? I would have felt less curious if he had been sitting on the grass. It was such a lovely morning. But to remain closeted in that tiny space, secure from the sun, the sweet air and the sound of birds. I couldn't for the life of me imagine any reason to account for such odd behaviour.

The service at Widdicombe Church is a complete blank in my memory. Mary and

Matilda talked about the sermon later, but I remember nothing. My mind fastened on the puzzle of that man sitting up there on the moor. All I wanted was the service to end so that I could see if he was still there and if he was—then, I decided, I would tell Mr. Rothley and persuade him to go with us to the Gate and ask the man whatever we deemed possible to ask him.

WE came out of Church and I hurried my cousins into the car. By this time, they were, I was thankful to find, getting a little more interested. We churned our way up the terrible hill out of Widdicombe. To my delight the side-car was there, the man inside securely fastened as ever; but now there were two cars drawn up opposite to him on the other side of the road, and the people were picknicking on the grass. I got out and opened the Gate. "Shall I go and ask him if there is anything the matter?" I said to the girls. They looked at the side-car and then at the picnic on the grass, then at me. "No," they both said with great decision. Mary began to drive through the Gate and I had to jump in quickly.

"Dash it all, I might have asked him."

"And a great fool you would have looked," Matilda replied. "What did you propose to ask him? Would you have wrenched open the door of the side-car? Suppose it had stuck? Suppose he held on to the inside? Could you imagine anything dafter?"

"Well, anyway I am going to tell Mr. Rothley."

"All right, *tell* Mr. Rothley, but mark my words you'll end by looking silly."

We got home before dinner; in retrospect what a dinner! All afternoon I wondered about the man. After tea I secretly coaxed and persuaded Mary to take me (without telling Matilda, who, I felt, strongly disapproved of my curiosity) to the Hemsworthy Gate to make sure the man was still there. Mary was a gentler person than her sister and we quietly stole out of the farmyard and pelted away up on to the moor in the little car. Near the wall we stopped and I strolled up to the Gate. Thank Heaven! He was *still* there, still in the side-car. I flung myself back into the car.

"Turn round and drive like mad," I said, "This time I really am going to tell Mr. Rothley".

WE tore back and somewhat breathlessly told the tale to the farmer. He was not so impressed as I had hoped, but he agreed in his cautious North country way that it was a "queer carry-on", and finally agreed to come along and "take a look". We bundled into the car. Mr. Rothley's large person made it shrink to the proportions of a perambulator. Matilda got us back to the Hemsworthy Gate about six o'clock. The man in the side-car? Well, he wasn't there any more.

As Matilda had predicted, I felt a monumental fool. It all seemed too silly for words. Mr. Rothley laughed, the girls laughed and I laughed too—at least I made sounds like a laugh. It was a frightfully funny joke. It lasted a whole fortnight. It said much for my self-control that I never once failed to say, "Ha! Ha!", like a laugh every time the affair came up.

All the same, I have thought about it for years. As a story, it is a life saver at a party. No one has ever suggested an explanation which sounds in the least reasonable or acceptable. The facts remain we saw that man shut up tightly in that side-car seven times in two days. There was no one with him. There were no signs of a meal at any time. If he was waiting for some one it was a curiously inconvenient place to wait and a very peculiar manner of waiting. There may have been a bet of some kind, but what on earth about? Of course he was not an escaped convict. I give it up. I've been giving it up for thirty years.

CARDS ON THE TABLE

By CLIFFORD BAX

(Written for Thea Holme and Sylvia Coleridge.)

IT is a summer afternoon in 1609. The scene is an upper room in London. Casement windows, now open. Two chairs. A table. A sideboard with glasses and a bottle of sack. Flowers. A set of virginals.

MARY FITTON, a dark maid-of-honour, is reading a book. It is a first edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

MARY: Really! To set them out in print for the whole world to read! He was humble enough at first, but what savages these poets can be . . .

(*Reading*)

"In the old age black was not counted fair
Or, if it were, it bore not beauty's name"—

Indeed! Oh, I remember how woe-begone he looked when he pushed these verses into my hand.

"But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty slandered with a bastard shame"—

Pretty compliments! But there—no matter how carefully he apes the manners of the Court, he will always be a crude country fellow.

"In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes
For they, in thee a thousand errors note"—

William, my poor William, is *that* the way to win a lady? You hardly noted a thousand errors, I think, when we were a-bed together . . . (*Taking up a letter.*) The impudence . . . Imploring me to admit him to-night. Oh no, no, no, my broken-hearted rhyme-spinner, never again will you find me in a coming-on disposition. Never again! I'll write him a scornful letter. Something to tease him. "Kiss me this once and then be going"? That would serve well.

(*She goes to the virginals, sings and plays.*)

"On a day the amorous Silvy
Said to her shepherd: Sweet, how do ye?
Kiss me this once and God be wi' ye,
My sweetest dear:
Kiss me this once and God be wi' ye,
For now the morning draweth near."

(*Enter* LADY PENELOPE OCKLEY, *a fair lady. She listens.*)

"With that, her fairest bosom showing,
Opening her lips, rich perfumes blowing,
She said: Now kiss me and be going,
My sweetest dear"—

Who is it? Penelope. Darling.

PENELOPE: Why cousin, it's a month and a morning since I heard you sing.

MARY: But you enter unannounced? What has come over my man, Thomas Pinchbody? I'll dock his wages, I will.

PENELOPE: He was busy washing your coach, and I assured him that I know my way to your room as I know the heart-line on my hand.

MARY: That heart-line . . . A new scar on it?

PENELOPE: Not yet.

MARY: Aha. Another swain? Who is he?

PENELOPE: Remember, we always agreed to give no names.

MARY: A duke? A lord at least?

PENELOPE: I leave the nobility to you, sweetest.

MARY: Me?

PENELOPE: Everybody knows of your madcap affair with Lord William Herbert. But everybody.

MARY: That's long ago.

PENELOPE: After all, old Queen Elizabeth wouldn't have you at Court on account of it.

MARY: Jealous old virgin!

PENELOPE: Still, you're safely married now. How is he?

MARY: The Colonel? Finds me as fascinating as Cleopatra.

PENELOPE: (*Referring to the Sonnets.*) And what does he think of *that*?

MARY: Will Shakespeare's little book?

PENELOPE: That book gives it all away, you know.

MARY: As if I'd let the Colonel read it. He'd murder me at the first sonnet.

PENELOPE: Suppose he buys it?

MARY: He never buys a book, only borrows.

PENELOPE: That's why you have so many? And by the way, Mary, did you ever attend any of Mr. Shakespeare's plays?

MARY: He used to pester me about them, but it's such a way to go—over the river to that sordid South Bank. I've seen a few of them, yes.

PENELOPE: Of course. You know him so well.

MARY: I had to meet him now and again. You know how ambitious these players are to get into real Society.

PENELOPE: Those little poems will make anyone think that he was more than a mere acquaintance.

MARY: My dear child, is a woman responsible for the absurd antics of her admirers? I never gave that man the slightest encouragement.

PENELOPE: Then I've come on a fool's errand.

MARY: Why?

PENELOPE: Ah, that's a secret.

MARY: He certainly has improved. Perhaps I can take a little credit for that. Of course he still has that odious Warwickshire accent—or is it Worcestershire?—but if he could get to Court now you wouldn't feel really ashamed of him.

PENELOPE: I don't think I would be.

MARY: As for an affair, cousin, surely you can't imagine that I would endure the passion of a mere player?

PENELOPE: The man I want is a poet too.

MARY: Oh, oh. And what will *your* husband say?

PENELOPE: My husband is in Flanders.

MARY: So you're going to kick up your heels? However, tell me all about your poet? Not old Jonson? Drayton, perhaps?

PENELOPE: I wanted your advice, but if you always kept *your* poet at arm's-length, I may as well go.

MARY: Don't go. I'm deeply interested.

PENELOPE: If your experience of men is confined to Lord William and the poor dear Colonel . . .

MARY: That isn't quite what I said.

PENELOPE: So sweet to have seen you, and how well you are looking.

MARY: You can't go. This poet-man . . .

PENELOPE: We shall always be charmed to see you and the Colonel at supper. Just send Pinchbody with a note to say you are coming.

MARY: As a matter of fact, Penelope, I know quite a lot about men and their love-making.

PENELOPE: Not enough, I'm afraid, to tell me what I want to know. Goodbye.

MARY: Wait, dearest. You can't go away without drinking a health to your new love—

PENELOPE: Well—

MARY: No "well" about it. Sit down.

PENELOPE: Still the same as you were at school.

MARY: Imperious—that's what the men call me. They like it. Now Penelope, —to the rhymer who has captured your fancy!

PENELOPE: To him!

MARY: Love at first sight? That's the only real love, you know. Of course I'm not thinking of the Colonel. He is just a steady stand-by in case anything goes wrong.

PENELOPE: Marriage is very monotonous, but it has its conveniences.

MARY: And does he respond? He must be terribly flattered. After all, you're married to a Knight Bachelor.

PENELOPE: There's somebody in the way.

MARY: His wife? Why do poets always marry? They're hopeless husbands.

PENELOPE: But good lovers?

MARY: Penelope, let's be perfectly frank.

PENELOPE: When one woman says that to another, she means "Put all your cards on the table, darling, but be sure you won't see any of mine".

MARY: I'm sorry you don't trust me.

PENELOPE: (*Reading.*)

"Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;
For well thou knows't to my dear doting heart
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel"—

Don't you wish he had written those lovely lines to *you*? (*Silence.*) I suppose he didn't (*Silence.*) No, I'd forgotten: he's quite blind to your good looks.

MARY: Of course they were written to me!

PENELOPE: Oh! I'm afraid my virtue would never hold out against poetry. You're marvellous.

MARY: I can always control my emotions.

PENELOPE: Was Will Shakespeare fickle?

MARY: Not about me, dear.

PENELOPE: And—you have seen him lately?

MARY: Really I don't remember.

PENELOPE: Strange!

MARY: Is he young? Fat, lean? Poor, of course. Good-looking or ravishingly ugly—like Ben Jonson?

PENELOPE: To be made immortal, Mary! Look—

"Gain'st death and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom"—

Isn't that marvellous . . .

MARY: Well, I hope your rhymester doesn't talk as much as mine does.

PENELOPE: Does?

MARY: How do you mean?

PENELOPE: I thought you had sent him off with a flea in his ear. Then you still see him . . .

MARY: He begs me to let him come this evening.

PENELOPE: This evening?

MARY: Why not? I've only to lift my little finger.

PENELOPE: D'you enjoy torturing the poor man?

MARY: I certainly do.

PENELOPE: They say he's applying for a coat-of-arms.

MARY: As if a coat-of-arms could make him a gentleman.

PENELOPE: Mary!

MARY: Another cup?

PENELOPE: Thank you. (*They drink again.*) We said we'd be utterly frank.

MARY: I am always frank.

PENELOPE: Not a bit of it! For instance,—tell me to go if I send you into one of your black furies,—but, speaking frankly, I don't believe for one minute that you never took Will Shakespeare as a lover.

MARY: I scorned him.

PENELOPE: We all know that. It's in the little book. But I'll never believe that you entirely rejected the man who wrote that

play about the two Italian lovers. I forget its name.

MARY: Something about Juliet, I think. But of course that was long before *my* time.

PENELOPE: I never regarded you as a fool—

MARY: Thank you. I'm not.

PENELOPE: You were!

MARY: When?

PENELOPE: If you really threw away so rare a poet. Poets are not created each year like our Lord Mayors. If that man had pined for me, as he pined for you, I'd have preferred him above Lord Leicester or even Lord Essex. So there! You were a vain silly girl, thinking yourself too fine for him.

MARY: If we were still at school I would slap your face.

PENELOPE: I thought you could tell me something about him—

MARY: Is *that* where the wind blows!

PENELOPE: Yes. But I want a deep love.

MARY: Will Shakespeare . . . Wonder of wonders!

PENELOPE: However, as you hardly know him . . .

MARY: I know him in every aspect.

PENELOPE: As a lover?

MARY: Very well. Yes. But not, of course, as an equal.

PENELOPE: He makes love prettily?

MARY: No. He is horrible.

PENELOPE: Tell me.

MARY: Cruel, mean, utterly selfish, and all his poetical chatter is merely the hook to catch in your gills and land you. A bad man, I warn you. Most sincerely, Penelope. Never yield to him. Fickle? Why, every pretty girl on the Bankside is a nymph to that satyr. I implore you—break while you can. There is always a point at which we can stop an affair. Don't be deceived by his honey-speeches. He could make love to a washerwoman's mop. Words just go to his head. Promise me, cousin, that you will stop while you can.

PENELOPE:

"Thou art so tyrannous, so as thou art"—

MARY: That detestable book of Sonnets.

PENELOPE: Sweet of you to warn me—

MARY: I do, I do!

PENELOPE: But you know how it is. Once in love, we are stuck in the treacle like a poor little bee on her back.

MARY: How you will despise yourself—afterwards.

PENELOPE: Do you?

MARY: Stop it all, darling.

PENELOPE: Too late for that. This evening . .

MARY: You've made a tryst, you and that dreadful man?

PENELOPE: I'll be frank to the end, Mary. I do not credit one word that you have spoken against him; and if he once possessed a Dark Lady, he is now to possess one who is Fair.

MARY: He's a boor, darling.

PENELOPE: The poem about Venus and Adonis doesn't suggest that.

MARY: He wrote that poem about the poor old woman in Stratford.

PENELOPE: What a tribute. She must be exquisite.

MARY: Anne Hathaway? He treats her brutally, but that often happens with men who are jumped up, as we say. Penelope!

PENELOPE: Well?

MARY: There are tears for you in my heart.

PENELOPE: How sweet and tender, cousin. But I fancy that I can tame his natural brutality. Anyway, I have learned what I wanted to know. Goodbye, my love.

Exit.

MARY: How dare she! Will, you are to come this evening without fail. I'll send him a really bewitching letter. I'll play for him, sing for him. What shall I say? (*Writing*) "Come Will. Do you need any other words? Not you!" And Pinchbody shall deliver the message immediately. Pinchbody, Pinchbody!

JOHNSON AND BOSWELL IN THE ISLE OF SKYE

BY SETON GORDON

IN the late summer of 1773 two gentlemen might have been seen to leave Inverness and travel westward along the shore of Loch Ness. One of them was the celebrated Samuel Johnson, a large, heavy man with dignity of bearing, the other his friend and companion, James Boswell, a Scotsman of scholarly attainments and an admirer of the great man whose Highland and Hebridean journey he was later to record.

It was nine o'clock on the morning of August 30 that the pair left Inverness. They were accompanied by Boswell's servant, one Joseph Ritter, a Bohemian who spoke many languages, and were attended by two Highlanders on foot, John Hay and Lauchlan Vass. The luggage of the party was carried on a fourth horse.

The first night they passed at Fort Augustus (they had travelled along the south shore of Loch Ness) and the second at Anoch in Glen Moriston, at an inn kept by one MacQueen.

Next day they traversed Glen Moriston, a glen where the graceful birch is seen at its best, crossed the watershed at the head of the glen, and began the long descent into Glen Shiel. That summer must have been a cold one, for Samuel Johnson records that a small snow bed lay on one of the high hills. "It had," he writes, "already lasted to the end of August, and was likely to maintain its contest with the sun, till it should be reinforced by winter!" Here Johnson dismounted and sat on a bank. He records that "the day was calm, the air soft, and all was rudeness, silence and solitude . . . Whether I spent the hour well I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narrative".

IT was in Glen Shiel that the historic conversation on hills took place between Boswell and Johnson. When Boswell said, no doubt referring to one of the Sisters of Kintail, "There is a mountain like a cone", Johnson countered with "No, sir. It would be called so in a book; and when a man comes to look at it, he sees 'tis not so. It is indeed pointed at the top. But one side of it is much longer than the other". When Boswell called another mountain "immense", Johnson replied, "No, but 'tis a considerable protuberance".

The little party, pioneers all, descended into Glen Shiel, and halted at a place named Achnashiel, which Boswell described as "a kind of rural village". The men, women and children of the village were all MacRaes, and none of them could speak a word of English. They all gathered round the travellers as they refreshed themselves with milk and wheaten bread (the latter they had brought with them). This, for Johnson at all events, was a novel experience, and he records that the people gathered "I believe without any evil intention, but with a very savage wildness of aspect and manner".

On the side of the road can be seen the stone on which Johnson rested. It is still named Johnson's Stone and, as may be seen in the photograph, is not unlike a chair in appearance. Of the township of Achnashiel not a house remains; nor are the ruins readily seen. Had Johnson and Boswell been able to converse in Gaelic they had perhaps been shown by the inhabitants the larger boulder on the hillside across the Shiel river where Prince Charles Edward took shelter for a night when a fugitive: the stone has

since then been named Clach Phrionnsa, the Prince's Stone.

THEY crossed the high pass of Mam Ratagan, and Johnson's weight on the steep ascent was almost too much for his horse, which staggered and threatened to throw its rider. Johnson records that this was the only moment when he was in peril during his Hebridean tour.

They reached Glen Elg, where a narrow tide-swept strait separates the mainland from Skye, and there hoped to find a boat from Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat to take them to that island; the boat indeed had awaited them for several days and, their provisions running short, the crew had sailed back to Armadale only a few hours before the arrival of the travellers, who had, perforce, to lodge at the inn, which they found most uncomfortable.

Next morning they chartered a boat, and reached the shore of Armadale before one o'clock. Their reception by Sir Alexander MacDonald does not seem to have been pleasing to either of the travellers, yet Johnson records that at Sir Alexander's table they were "entertained, according to the ancient usuage of the North, with the melody of the bagpipe. Everything in those countries has its history. As the bagpiper was playing, an elderly gentleman informed us, that in some remote time, the MacDonalds of Glengary having been injured, or offended by the inhabitants of Culloden, and resolving to have justice or vengeance, came to Culloden on a Sunday, where, finding their enemies at worship, they shut them up in the church, which they set on fire; and this, said he, is the tune that the piper played while they were burning".

This tune, which Johnson does not name, I recognize as Cill Chriosd or Glengarry's March. The church where the worshippers were imprisoned and burned to death is now generally supposed to have been at Urray, in Easter Ross. This Pibroch is a piece of classical pipe music, the Ceòl Mór or Big Music, difficult to play and hard to memorize. It is

Johnson's chair in Glen Shiel

curious that Samuel Johnson should have spoken of this tune, played by a piper whom he does not name, and who does not seem to have been pointed out to him as being a player of special renown, while he makes scant mention later on, when he writes of his stay at Dunvegan, of the great MacCrimmons, for centuries the hereditary pipers to the MacLeods, and who were still, at the time of his visit, pre-eminent. He does not say that he heard MacCrimmon play.

I HAVE mentioned that the travellers were dissatisfied with their stay at Armadale. Indeed Boswell came near fighting a duel with Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat because of the manner in which he wrote of the latter's hospitality.

Despite the Disarming Act which was passed after Culloden, and which rendered the wearing of the kilt an offence punishable by death, Johnson records that he found it still commonly worn in the Isle of Skye, where at the present day it is rarely seen, except on occasions of ceremony. The wearing of the Highland bonnet was, he says, almost universal, whereas to-day it is even more rarely seen than the kilt.

Hebridean weather has changed little since that summer, nearly two hundred years ago, when Johnson and Boswell visited the Western Isles. Johnson's description of the weather might have been written by a traveller of the present time:

> In our passage from Scotland to Sky (it will be noted that he spells Skye without its modern "e"), we were wet for the first time with a shower. This was the beginning of the Highland winter, after which we were told that a succession of three dry days was not to be expected for many months. The winter of the Hebrides consists of little more than rain and wind.

After a stay of some days at Armadale Johnson and Boswell received an invitation to stay with MacLeod of Raasay on his island, distant two or three miles from Skye. They crossed, again on horseback, a rough

The Prince's Stone in Glen Shiel—where Prince Charlie hid.

moorland track (there were then no roads in Skye), to Corriechatachan beneath the high hill, Beinn na Cailliche, where they received a most hospitable welcome from Lachlan MacKinnon, tacksman of Corriechatachan. They discovered that the traveller Pennant had recently been staying here, and that he had climbed Beinn na Cailliche, but neither Johnson, nor the more active James Boswell, showed any inclination to ascend these steep slopes, the home of the golden eagle and a few pairs of ptarmigan. There is a tradition that a Norse princess is buried beneath the large cairn of stones which stands upon the hill top, and from Johnson's description one gathers that he was told something of this tradition.

WHEN they left Corriechatachan they journeyed to the shore, and embarked in MacLeod of Raasay's six-oared boat, which was built in Norway.

Raasay House, where the party stayed, is a pleasant house with a magnificent view across the Sound to the Cuillin hills. The Inner Sound, which lies to the east of Raasay, has been surveyed by the Admiralty during recent years, and has been found to be of an unexpected depth—1,062 feet—which is deeper than Loch Morar.*

MacLeod of Raasay was "out" in the rising of 1745, and his castle of Brochel, on the opposite side of the island to Raasay was bombarded by a government warship. By the time of Johnson's visit the family seems to have recovered their fortunes, for both Johnson and Boswell mention their hospitable reception. On the passage across from Skye the wind rose, and the four rowers, to infuse more power into their strokes, sang an Iorram. An Iorram is a song that is sung by rowers to keep the oars together: it may be in the form of a Pibroch, such as "MacLeod of MacLeod's Rowing Pibroch". Their "pilot", as Boswell names him, was Malcolm MacLeod, of the Raasay family, who as a young man had conducted Prince Charles Edward from Raasay to MacKinnon's country in the south of Skye. Boswell was delighted to meet this historic figure and thus describes him:

> "He was now sixty-two years of age, quite the Highland gentleman, of a stout well-made person, well-proportioned; a manly countenance browned with the weather, but a ruddiness in his cheeks, a good way up which his rough beard extended; a quick lively eye, not fierce in his look, but firm and good-humoured. He had a pair of brogues, tartan hose which came up only near to his knees and left them bare, a purple kilt, a black waistcoat, a short green coat with gold cord, a large blue bonnet with a gold-thread button. I never saw a figure that was more perfectly a presentative of a Highland gentleman."

Malcolm MacLeod told the travellers that he had in his possession the bottle in which the Prince (disguised as his servant) carried a little brandy during their long walk through the hills to Strath, the home of the chief of the MacKinnons.

THE MacLeods of Raasay were dealt with more leniently by the government for their rising to assist the Prince in 1745, than most Highland families. It may have been because Raasay himself had made over the estate to his son before the rising. That son was now entertaining Johnson and Boswell. But the government troops burnt every house on Raasay, and the house in which the visitors were now entertained was a new building, all except the walls, which were of the old house. On Raasay, in the words of Samuel Johnson, "we found nothing but civility, elegance, and plenty".

He mentioned the interesting fact, presumably told him by Raasay himself, that during the last four hundred years the estate had not lost or gained a single acre (MacLeod of Raasay at this time owned the islands of Raasay, Rona and Fladda, and an extensive

* Loch Morar, in depth just under 1,000 ft. and the haunt, like Loch Ness, of a Monster, had hitherto been considered the deepest water, either salt or fresh, this side of the Continental Shelf, or the Atlantic far west of the British Isles.

part of the Isle of Skye). For two hundred years there had been a special bond of friendship between MacLeod of Raasay and MacDonald of Sleat. This friendship was traditionally confirmed at the death of the leading man of either family, when his sword was given into the custody of the survivor. The estate of Raasay, so long intact, is now in other hands, and the old family have gone.

Johnson and Boswell arrived at Raasay late in the afternoon of a fine harvest day, and while yet they were at sea heard the songs of the harvesters, those harvest labour songs which the men and women of the Isles used to sing as they reaped and bound the grain.

AT Raasay they found a company of thirty assembled to meet them, and that evening there was a dance, to the music of the fiddle and not of the bagpipe, the Highland reels being danced with great vigour. Johnson, watching the dancers with pleasure, had, as his companion, the Rev. Donald MacQueen, the learned minister of Kilmuir ; the two quickly formed a strong friendship.

What we should call a Ceilidh followed the dance, and Johnson was much impressed by the beauty of the Gaelic songs he heard sung, and wished to learn of their history, and to have them translated to him. We are told something of the Raasay family. It consisted of the laird, his lady (always known as the Lady Raasay), three sons and ten daughters. There was a tutor for the sons, and the Lady Raasay saw herself to the education of her daughters.

Johnson remarks that, "more gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society, is not found in the most polished countries".

Johnson in his description of Raasay gives us an interesting side light on the methods of harvesting. He says that the women reaped the corn, and the men bound up the sheaves. The corn was reaped by the sickle, and "the strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulation of the harvest song, in which all their voices were united".

MacLeod of Raasay kept a herd of four hundred black cattle on the island at the time Johnson stayed there.

AT that time there were no red deer on Raasay (these must have been introduced later) but we learn that there were great numbers of blackgame, two of which, newly shot, the travellers inspected. Blackgame have now almost disappeared from Raasay, as they have from most parts of the Hebrides and the western mainland of Scotland. There were no foxes on Raasay, but they were so harmful in Skye that Johnson makes the noteworthy observation that a guinea was paid for each fox destroyed, "a sum", as he writes, "so great in this part of the world, that, in a short time, Sky may be as free from foxes, as England from wolves".

At Raasay House, MacLeod happened to be staying at the time, and by him, the chief of the MacLeods, Johnson and Boswell were invited to stay at his castle of Dunvegan in Skye. On the way they remained a night at Kingsburgh (where, writes Johnson, James V of Scotland stayed during his visit to Skye and gave the place it name) with MacDonald of Kingsburgh, and his wife, the celebrated Flora MacDonald.

On the memorial to Flora MacDonald at Kilmuir, each year visited by thousands of people, are inscribed Johnson's lines, "A name that will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour".

Boswell records that "to see Mr. Samuel Johnson salute Miss Flora MacDonald was a wonderful romantic scene to me". Of her husband he writes, "He was quite the figure of a gallant Highlander. He had his tartan plaid thrown about him, a large blue bonnet with a knot of black ribbon like a cockade, a brown short coat of a kind of duffle, a tartan vest with gold buttons and gold buttonholes, a bluish filibeg, and tartan hose".

They had a most hospitable reception at

Kingsburgh. Johnson slept in the bed in which Prince Charlie had slept. On a piece of paper, written in pencil in his hand was found in the morning the words, "*Quantum cedat virtutibus aurum*". He had presumably had in mind Flora MacDonald's part in the ill-fated rising of 1745. In his "Journey" he describes Flora MacDonald as a woman "of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, and elegant presence".

FROM Kingsburgh the travellers crossed Loch Snisort, sending their horses round the head of the loch. Tired with riding over boggy ground, they came thankfully to Dunvegan, where they met the Lady MacLeod, who had lived many years in England and "who knew all the arts of southern elegance, and all the modes of English economy". Johnson records that the castle was accessible only from the sea until "the last possessor opened an entrance by stairs upon the land".

Both Johnson and Boswell write with great enthusiasm of the way in which they were entertained by MacLeod and his lady at Dunvegan Castle, and they left it reluctantly for Talisker, then occupied by Colonel MacLeod, an officer in the Dutch service. Describing the place, Johnson in his Journal uses words which have often been quoted, "Talisker is the place beyond all that I have seen, from which the gay and the jovial seem utterly excluded; and where the hermit might expect to grow old in meditation, without possibility of disturbance or interruption".

But at Talisker they found good cheer, and when they left it did so with no enthusiasm. They stayed again at Coirechatachan, arriving there, unannounced, at eleven o'clock in the evening but receiving nevertheless a real Highland welcome, and at midnight, within an hour of their arrival, sitting down to a good supper beside a cheerful fire. Boswell drank so heartily of punch that he had little recollection of what later happened, and at noon the next day awoke with a bad headache. At one o'clock Johnson came in to the room and said, "What, drunk yet?" "Sir," Boswell replied, "they kept me up"... "No," answered Johnson, "you kept them up, you drunken dog".

THE ruins of Coirechatachan to-day stand deserted. Changed times have come to Skye, and one wonders what the old Highlanders, the chiefs and the tacksmen, would have done when whisky and wine are as scare as amethysts on the Cuillin.

After a two days' stay at Coirechatachan the travellers journeyed to Ostaig, near Armadale. There is preserved at Dunvegan Castle a letter from Johnson, thanking the MacLeods for their hospitality and saying that the writer was then awaiting a boat. Of their journey to Coll and, later to Mull, I have no space to write, and I must content myself by saying that they found on these islands the same generous hospitality as in Raasay and Skye—a special attribute of people of the Hebrides.

WERE they to revisit Skye at the present time, Johnson and Boswell would find great changes, yet they would be received with the same warmth and friendship. They would find an ambitious Hydro-electric scheme in progress in the north wing of Skye, and roads where formerly there were tracks. They would still find Gaelic, or as they termed it Erse, spoken by the people, but would find the population of the island declining at alarming rate. They would find the Cuillin hills, then considered inaccessible, the playground of mountaineers from Scotland, England and even from foreign lands. They would find MacLeod of Raasay's galley displaced by a steamer which, leaving Portree each morning with passengers and mails, calls at Raasay half a mile later on her voyage to the railway termini at Kyle of Loch Alsh and Mallaig; in the afternoon she touches at Raasay again on her return journey to Portree. They would find Raasay's house an hotel, and many of the trees which

they admired felled ; they would find the iron which they mention exploited, but the mine (which was worked by German prisoners during the First World War) now abandoned. They would find the *cas chrom* or crooked spade so minutely described by Johnson still in use in a few districts for turning over the soil of the small fields, although it has been largely superceded by the horse plough, and more recently the tractor. Johnson mentions that the grain grown was oats and barley. The oats are still grown, but in Skye and Raasay barley is no longer seen, although it is still grown in the Outer Hebrides.

Writing of the animals of Skye, Johnson makes the interesting observation that neither rats nor mice were to be found on the island. Mice are now abundant, both on the moors and in the houses, and both species of rat are found. The weasel (by which he evidently means the stoat) was so numerous and bold that it was to be heard "rattling behind chests or beds, as rats in England". The stoat is still numerous in Skye, but the weasel is unknown.

IN describing the music of the island Johnson makes a short, and all too brief, reference to the great MacCrimmons. He writes:

The solace which the bagpipe can give, they have enjoyed; but among other changes, which the last revolution introduced, the use of the bagpipe begins to be forgotten. Some of the chief families still entertain a piper, whose office was anciently hereditary. MacCrimmon was piper to MacLeod, and Rankin to MacLean of Col.

The tunes of the bagpipe are traditional. There has been in Sky, beyond all time of memory, a college of pipers, under the direction of MacCrimmon, which is not quite extinct. There was another in Mull, superintended by Rankin, which expired about sixteen years ago. To these colleges, while the pipe retained its honour, the students of musick repaired for education. I have had my dinner exhilerated by the bagpipe, at Armidale, at Dunvegan, and in Col.

Johnson and Boswell left Skye on board a vessel carrying a cargo of kelp, and encountered a storm so violent that they were unable to reach the harbour of Tobermory in Mull, whither they were bound. They had on board with them MacLean of Coll, and he guided the vessel to the port of that lesser island, where the distinguished travellers were entertained by him and had, to their satisfaction, an additional experience of Island life.

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

ELECTIONS AND ELECTIONEERING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY CHARLES PETRIE

THE traditional interpretation of English history in the first half of the eighteenth century has had a long life, but it is dying now before the researches of modern scholars. The old theory, it will be remembered, was that in 1714 the Glorious Revolution of 1688 was carried to a logical conclusion by the accession of the House of Hanover to the throne with the almost unanimous approval of the English people, and that the two attempts to upset this happy state of affairs were the work of a handful of Scottish chieftains and Irish adventurers with no support worth the name to the South of the Tweed. The examination of local records, which has been one of the most notable achievements of recent years, has now proved that at least until the middle of the eighteenth century opposition to the new regime was both deep-seated and wide-spread, and that Dr. Johnson was not very far from the truth when he told the scandalized Boswell that "if England were fairly polled, the present King would be sent away to-night and his adherents hanged to-morrow". It is more than probable that only the existence of the English Channel prevented a War of the British Succession in which the leading Powers of Europe would have participated.

The latest contribution* to the history of this period deals with the contest for the county of Oxford at the General Election of 1754, and the author is to be congratulated upon a sound and scholarly piece of work. Elections were not so common in those days as they were subsequently to become. In Northamptonshire, for example, there were but three contested elections during the whole of the eighteenth century, and at the General Election of 1754 only forty-two seats were fought in the whole of Great Britain. In Oxfordshire itself there had been no contest since 1710; that is to say the dynasty had been changed, and two civil wars had taken place, without the electors of that county having an opportunity of expressing their opinion.

MR. ROBSON very rightly sticks to his brief, which is to give an account of the election itself, but to get the story in its proper perspective it must be examined in the light of the short-lived, but somewhat surprising, renewal of Jacobite activity which took place in the early fifties, that is to say several years after the Stuart cause was supposed to have gone down to final disaster at Culloden.

In 1750 Charles Edward had himself visited London in disguise, and had certainly met two of the characters whose names appear in these pages, namely Dr. William King of St. Mary Hall and the Viscountess Primrose; it is also by no means improbable that he met on the same occasion the Earl of Westmorland, subsequently High Steward of Oxford University, and the Duke of Beaufort. In the following year one of the members for Westminster, the Hon. Alexander Murray, became a Jacobite, and fled the country, while for some time the continually simmering Elibank Plot was the cause of no inconsiderable concern to the authorities. Finally, on 8th June, 1753, Archibald Cameron was hanged, nominally on his attainder for having been out in the Forty-Five, but actually for his complicity in this latest conspiracy.

In these circumstances the determination of the Whigs to wrest the county of Oxford from their opponents may well have been due to other than purely local considerations.

* *The Oxfordshire Election of* 1754. By R. J. Robson. Oxford University Press, 12s. 6d.

The University and the City were both Tory, but if the county could be won the position of their opponents in the Midlands would be seriously weakened.

AT this point the question arises to what extent could these Oxfordshire Tories be described as Jacobites? One recalls the lines of Edward Coxe fifty years later:

> To make the wrong appear the right
> And keep our rulers in:
> In Walpole's time, 'twas Jacobite,
> In Pitt's, 'tis Jacobin!

Dr. King was unquestionably a Jacobite, and we know that a few years earlier he was quite ready to employ other than constitutional means to attain his ends: he was generally regarded as a violent man, and Mr. Robson may well be right in his assumption that for this reason the Principal of St. Mary Hall was not *persona grata* with a good many of the more timid Tories. Another undoubted Jacobite was Lady Primrose, who had entertained Charles Edward at her house in Essex Street, Strand, and who, significantly enough, was one of the guests at the Encaenia in the summer of 1754. It is true that both Dr. King and Lady Primrose subsequently turned against the Prince, but during the period covered by this book they were among his most devoted English supporters.

Certainly these so-called Jacobites had not lifted a finger when Charles Edward was at Derby less than ten years before. It is true that in October, 1745, Mrs. Butterfield of Middle Claydon in Buckinghamshire wrote of "the great Disafeckshon to the King (i.e. George II) in generall", while Dr. Brookes, the Rector of Shipton-under-Wychwood, assured a friend at the beginning of the next century that the North Oxfordshire squires in particular would have joined the Prince had he moved South from Derby; but in actual fact not a dog barked. A report to Louis XV in 1743 had mentioned as leading Jacobites in Oxfordshire the names of Lords Abingdon and Lichfield, Sir James Dashwood, Dr. Butler, Messrs Rowney, Herbert, Dawkins, and Moore. None of these took part in the Forty-Five.

IN these circumstances it is impossible to resist the conclusion that in 1754 Jacobitism in Oxfordshire, as elsewhere in England, was latent rather than patent, and the last wish of its votaries was to leave the decanter for the saddle. The brief revival of the previous three or four years had spent itself, and the Whigs were again on the offensive. At the same time, the Hanoverian regime was intensely disliked, and for the Royal Family itself there was positive distaste.

It is also not without interest to note that Mr. Robson's researches have led him to the conclusion that it was the smaller landowners who were Jacobites and Tories; in other words those who would naturally look to a strong monarchy to protect them against their more powerful neighbours. In this respect Oxfordshire was in no way peculiar, and there is very considerable evidence indeed to the effect that among the working-classes there was strong support for the Stuarts, and it was not long since in far-off Newcastle-on-Tyne strikers had demonstrated for Charles Edward as King Charles III.

To what extent the loyalty of these Oxfordshire Tories to the exiled dynasty was anything more than a question of sentiment must be largely a matter for conjecture, but there can be no doubt that the Whigs exploited it to the full, and thereby gained the votes of every elector who had anything to lose by a change of monarch. The evidence of these pages goes to show that the contest was a bitter one, though the convention that one did not canvass an opponent's tenants was observed by both parties. Incidentally, this convention died very hard, and as recently as the General Election of 1935 a West Country landowner, not a Tory by the way, was heard to complain that the other side was canvassing his own villages against him.

THE upshot of this 1754 election was that the two Tory candidates, Sir James Dashwood and Viscount Wenman, were returned,

but there was a petition: in those days there was no pretence of impartiality in such an event, for the case was argued before the House of Commons, which then voted on party lines. In these circumstances the expected took place; it was decided that a scrutiny proved every sort of irregularity on the part of the Tories, and that their majority was fictitious; therefore their Whig opponents, Viscount Parker and Sir Edward Turner, were declared to have been duly elected.

All the same the Whigs had left nothing to chance before the case came before the House of Commons, and every effort was made to play upon the feelings of the dominant majority at Westminster. A Mrs. Carnall, whose husband kept a grocer's shop at Carfax, testified that she had found a bundle of rags outside her premises, and amongst them was a piece of thick paper on which was written a set of verses in adulation of Charles Edward. At once it was asserted that the Tories were up to the neck in treason, and the Rag Plot attained widespread publicity both in London and Oxford until it had served its purpose, and was accordingly allowed to fade into oblivion. In actual fact there is much reason to suppose that the verses in question were written by that redoubtable Whig propagandist, Lady Susan Keck, while there can be scarcely any doubt that they were put among the rags for the express purpose of being found by Mrs. Carnall, who was a Whig herself. News of the affair soon reached Court circles, and we are told that George II "was provoked".

Shortly afterwards a prominent Tory declared that Horner, the butler of Exeter College, had inserted a portrait of Charles Edward in the back of his watch to compromise him. This was known locally as the Watch Plot, and Dr. King was suspected of being its author in order to discredit the Whigs for the Rag Plot.

AS for the cost of the contest Smollett was hardly exaggerating when he said that "the revenue of many an independent prince on the Continent would not have been sufficient to afford such sums of money as were expended in the course of this dispute". The expenses of the two Tory candidates amounted to £20,068 1s. 2d. towards which £8,595 10s. 0d. was raised among their friends and supporters: the difference between the two amounts they had to raise themselves. This presented no difficulty to Dashwood, but in the following year Wenman had to sublet to the Earl of Chichester a house he was renting in Grosvenor Square, and to sell all the contents other than the pictures.

No details of Whig expenditure, nor how it was met, are extant, but the election seems to have cost the victors less than the vanquished in hard cash, and being the Government party they were in a better position to reward their supporters in kind, or in what a later age would have described as "jobs for the boys". Applications for such favours varied from a red ribbon for a Mr. Montagu and a seat on the Welsh Bench for the Recorder of Banbury to "a pardon for a poor woman in Oxford goal (*sic*), under sentence of transportation for stealing a shift and an old cloack".

SUCH were the events and consequences of the General Election of 1754 in Oxfordshire, and they are admirably recounted in Mr. Robson's pages. To describe it as "Jacobitism's last fling" is somewhat of an exaggeration, but the analysis contained in this volume depicts the twilight of Jacobitism with the English squires midway between their fathers who had followed "High Church and Sacheverell", and their sons of whom Burke was to write that on the accession of George III "they changed their idol but they preserved their idolatry". Some of them must have wondered whether things had changed much in the county they had left if, in the Elysian Fields, the news reached them last January that the Oxford Union had passed a resolution regretting the fall of the House of Stuart.

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BRITAIN AND THE WORLD

PAX BRITANNICA. By F. A. Voigt. *Constable 25s.*

NOBODY who is studying the history of the war or the events leading up to it, still less those who are interested in the immediate post war developments can afford to be without this book. It is not a book to be glanced at; it is a book to be kept for special reference.

When we are reading Winston Churchill on the war, it would be wise occasionally to refer to Voigt's book and see what he has to say about the point interesting us at the moment. It may well not be in complete agreement with Mr. Churchill. If indeed we are reading any of the books by the great men of the last few years, it would be well to counter-check their statements with what Voigt has to say, especially about Yugoslavia, Greece, or Poland.

Voigt is known throughout Europe, America and Britain as a life-long specialist on Central and Eastern Europe. That is why his book is so valuable. None of the great statesmen of the West who wielded such influence, direct or indirect, on Eastern Europe in the nineteen-forties knew these countries half so well. It is a thousand pities that none of them heeded Voigt in those days when he was writing vigorously in the *Nineteenth Century*, and was there to be consulted at any moment, and that the advice of a young and inexperienced officer in the House of Commons called MacLean, and Randolph Churchill, was listened to instead. All that Voigt knew then he gives us in this book. He is at pains to find out what the real experts, who could never get the ear of our leaders, felt and saw and noted down at the time; those who were there on the spot, the lesser men but the fact-finders, and he gives us their information. It is a tragic story especially that of Mihailovitch, the responsibility for whose death I still believe lies heavily on people in this country. The way we were politically outmanoeuvred in Poland by Stalin has, I believe, never been so clearly told in thi country and the story of Greece is als fascinating.

To quote but twice will give some idea c the freshness of the approach.

"But neither Mr. Churchill who wa devoted to the Polish cause which appeale so strongly to his chivalrous temper, nc President Roosevelt, were equal to Marsh Stalin and Mr. Molotov in statecraft, know ledge of the subject, singleness of purpose an tenacity . . . Every demand made by Russi was in the end conceded . . . Mr. Churchi wanted Poland to be independent—he wante it ardently. He sorrowed over the thought that she might be cheated of her independence. But he was ignorant of Eastern European affairs, ignorant of Polish history and dependent on inferior advisers. Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden with him, soon found themselves in a tangle of inconsistencies and contradictions."

And later:

"If we wish to assess the magnitude of the error about Yugoslavia in purely pragmatic terms, we need but consider the situation as it would be within reasonable computation, if the error had not been made, that is to say if Great Britain had given all possible help to General Mihailovitch and the Homy Army and to the Royal Yugoslav Government. In that case Yugoslavia would be an independent country in close association with the Western Powers. The Straits and the Eastern Mediterranean would have security. Great Britain and the United States would be Danubian Powers . . . a large and promising area would be open to British trade, investment and enterprise . . . It is even conceivable that the Marshall plan would not have been necessary."

These and many other passages backed up by facts to prove the argument, make fascinating reading. This is a book on Eastern Europe and on Germany, with a Conservative approach. Too few books like it have been written since the war and too seldom have we had the opportunity in recent months of reading Mr. Voigt's practical and informed

comments on Foreign Affairs. This book cannot be ignored. We may not agree with all that Voigt writes but we get an angle on foreign policy not considered before by most people in this country.

WILLIAM TEELING.

STRIKING STRAIGHT

AN OUTSPOKEN SOLDIER: HIS VIEWS AND MEMOIRS. By Lieut-General Sir Giffard Martel, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., M.C. *Sifton Praed and Co. Ltd.* 21*s. net.*

SIR GIFFARD MARTEL is both an outstanding soldier and a remarkable man. In World War I, I remember him during the Third Battle of Ypres erecting a boxing-ring in the vicinity of Poperinghe so that he might challenge all comers, as if the battle itself were not sufficient of a bout. Again, I remember him in March, 1918, when everything was going West. One day I happened to be at Fricourt, when he came walking down the road. "Where are you going?" I shouted. "To Montauban," he answered, "I hear it is full of Germans", I replied. "Well I will go and see," said Martel, and off he moved eastwards. But of all his many achievements, the most unique is that he is the only soldier in this country, probably in the world, who has designed and built a tank with his own hands. This was in 1925, and the one-man tank he then produced became the ancestor of all armoured, tracked machine-gun carriers since.

In the recent war, during the retreat on Dunkirk, when this time things were going north-west, Martel went south-east. With one infantry brigade and the 1st Tank Brigade he attacked the Germans in the vicinity of Arras and took them completely by surprise. Later on, in December, very rightly he was given command of the Royal Armoured Corps, a formation he had long pressed for; in fact ever since November, 1916, when he put forward a remarkable paper entitled "A Tank Army".

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MACMILLAN

With the R.A.C. his energies had full scope, and had the War Office only given him a freer hand, there can be no doubt whatever that he would have produced the most efficient armoured force in the world. It would seem, however, that his abilities were too much for his masters; for in the autumn of 1942, he was sent on a mission to India, and, next, in the spring of 1943, he was removed from his command and appointed head of the British Military Mission in Russia. Though the loss to the cause of armour was a grievous one, the choice was also an admirable one, but I cannot help feeling that had the Foreign Office been better acquainted with Martel, he would not have been selected, for he was no believer in appeasement. His first interview with the Russians was like so many of his bouts in the ring; for, as he tells us, he used "tough stuff", and thereby obtained more information from our secretive ally than anyone else has before or since.

Returning home on 10th February, 1944, he found that his old command had been abolished, and less that a fortnight later lost an eye in a German air attack on St. James's. Eleven days after his eye was removed he wrote a note to the C.I.G.S. urging bold tank action on the opening of the Second Front, then in active preparation. And here we tumble on to the most astonishing thing in the whole book. He received a reply stating "that the power of the tank was on the wane and that the anti-tank gun now had the measure of the tank", therefore that the great successes of the Germans in the early part of the war could no longer be repeated. Yet, when the trial came, General Patton carried out the most remarkable tank attack of the whole war: a complete vindication of Martel's views.

His family motto is: "*Martelez toujours droit*"—"Always strike straight"—and should the reader believe in hitting a nail on its head, he will find both instruction and entertainment in these out-spoken memoirs.

J. F. C. FULLER.

Novels

FONTAGRE. Jean Orieux. *Bodley Head.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

THREE OF HEARTS. James Cain. *Robert Hale.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

THE VOICE OF A STRANGER. Emyr Humphreys. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

FONTAGRE which has been awarded the Grand Prix de l'Académié Française deals with a kind of French life which few English people know and fewer still regard with sympathy, the life of the aristocratic remnant left to vegetate on its ancestral domaine.

The book is at once an elergy and an attempt to communicate the value of a way of life which to many people will seem quite valueless. The château of Fontagre is not beautiful, its inhabitants are neither edifying nor admirable, their coarseness, improvidence and obstinacy infuriate their bourgeoise daughter-in-law, whose large dowry has been sunk without trace.

The nerve centre of Fontagre is Elia, the old Marquise. Monsieur is her cousin as well as her husband and she, as so often in France, is the dominant personality. Elia seen through the eyes of the lad, who tells the story of the last days of Fontagre, a cousin who used to spend his holidays in the place, is a masterpiece of characterization. She is an old vixen, rude, greedy and shrill; she can rail like a fishwife but is unmistakably a great lady with freaks of generosity and tenderness, and, above all, a complete "confidence in her own instincts". "You deserve to die in a ditch" says her infuriated daughter-in-law. "I daresay, but it will be *my* ditch" screams Elia.

A century or more of liberty, equality and fraternity has left the Fontagres still contemptuous of it. Are they right?

Fifteen years ago, I doubt whether this book would have been written, or if it had, whether it would have received so distinguished an

award. The pre-war French intellectual attitude to what is left of their aristocracy was probably summed up by Montherlant's *Mort d'un célibataire*. I wonder whether Monsieur Orieux's book is not the beginning of a reconsideration, a realization that these people were neither as futile nor as contemptible as radical propaganda made out. Whether they were or were not, they were in any case the stuff of France (a Clouet face, says Monsieur Orieux of Elia), and the great pageant of French history and the incomparable tradition of French art was nourished by them, even if their day is now over, even if their end is to merge with the people as, at the end of this book, Elia, sold up at last, goes to live with her cook, Marinette. "They said they'd see me in tears yet. Why should I cry, because they've taken everything away from me? I'm still here, aren't I, and looking them in the eye?"

Monsieur Orieux has drawn Fontagre with love and yet with realism, his book is alternately funny and touching, it has the bouquet and the body of the vintages which the Fontagres appreciated so much.

MR JAMES CAIN is the author of that most successful of all modern tales of violence and passion, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. His style and methods have been copied indiscriminately, he remains their most effective exponent. For some curious reason he has provided the three novelettes contained in this volume with a somewhat pretentious foreword. If your taste is for lurid stories of violence, lust and fraud, forcefully presented with only a very occasional wobble into that bog of mushiness which laps the feet of nearly all these tough authors, you won't need the preface. If you wonder why a writer of such a remarkable literary craftsmanship should deal in these crudities, the preface will not enlighten you. The second story is the best, for Cain's chief gift is his power of conveying the terrible urgency of sexual passion. *Past all Dishonour* is, in a way, a vulgarized *Manon Lescaut*.

Christopher Hollis, M.P.

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HOLLIS & CARTER

I should regard this book as far more "unpleasant" than *The Naked and the Dead* although there is hardly a coarse word in it. The life it describes with such force and insistence, without any reason except, apparently, to entertain, fills the reader with nausea. Perhaps the preface was intended to counteract this.

THE VOICE OF A STRANGER the second novel by Emyr Humphreys is a very considerable advance, technically as well as imaginatively, upon his first, *The Little Kingdom*, which was good but somewhat "regional" in its appeal. *The Voice of a Stranger* has a story which keeps the reader interested, it has one character study at least which is a perfect realization of the mind and feeling of a young man, taken from his home and his private happiness and plunged into a civilization which excites him but which he does not understand. The story is set in Italy, the chief characters are two young Communists, ex-Partisans, who see their efforts being nullified by the astuteness of the old gang in winning over the "liberators", and the girl with whom they are both, though very differently, in love. One of this writer's most outstanding qualities is his power to convey the emotion of love at once realistically and poetically, another is the fact that he is not afraid of a strong, even a melodramatic plot. There is something Elizabethan in his tragic love story but his appreciation of the intrigues and the byplay in Tampoli has the astuteness of good journalism. This is an admirable story, for although the writer does not yet command the full power to deal with the lower depths of human perversity, his writing is good in texture and it is all marked with a personal attitude. Few of the young men who have begun to write since the war show so many of the essential qualities of the novelist.

RUBY MILLAR.

Short Notices

GOETHE

GOETHE. By Albert Schweitzer. *Black.* 6*s.*
GOETHE: WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE. Selections by Ludwig Curtius. Translated and edited, with an introduction, by Hermann Weigand. *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* 16*s.*

IN the bicentenary of Goethe's birth it is of special interest to read these lectures by the man whose life has so well exemplified the phrase first used by Goethe, "a good European," and whose versatility, practical and imaginative, may be compared with that of the great poet. Revealing the special impact of Goethe's thought and activity upon the writer, they bring out an aspect of the poet which is little appreciated by his admirers, many of whom just dimly regard him as adorning a semi-honorary position at the Weimar court, a man of whom Dr. Schweitzer says that "he was always ready to prove the unity of his personality by the union of practical work with intellectual activity . . . He would sit studying accounts and trying to set in order the finances of a small principality, examining plans so that streets and bridges should be constructed in the most practical way, and exerting himself, year in year out, to get disused mines at work". It appears to have been Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* himself, becoming a surgeon "that he may be able to serve" who helped to decide Dr. Schweitzer to qualify at the age of thirty as a medical missionary for his great work in French Equatorial Africa.

The lectures bring out clearly how Goethe's practical work itself inspired much at the basis of his *Faust*, on which he worked throughout his life as a poet—"Everything that he offers is what he himself has experienced in thought and in events, material which he has worked up into a higher reality". In "Goethe's Message to our Times"

he describes Goethe's prescient forebodings t at man is surrendering himself to social and c onomic magic as Faust in Part I had sur- r ndered himself to magic. "Do not become ı ere human things," says Goethe, "which a low to be stuffed into them souls that are a ljusted to the mass-will and pulsate in ı easure with it".

"Goethe Thinker", Dr. Schweitzer's con- t ibution to the special number of the French ı view *Europe* commemorating the centenary (Goethe's birth wonderfully summarizes (oethe's unsystematized philosophy, deriv- i g from contemplative absorption in the ı ysteries of nature. In ethics he explicitly (plored the utilitarian school of Bentham. He derived perhaps more from Spinoza than any other philosopher, and is often reminiscent of the pantheistic motif in Wordsworth.

Wisdom and Experience is an excellent anthology from the Conversations with Eckermann and Goethe's vast correspond- ence, well collated under some hundred headings. A book to keep by one.

BRIAN LUNN.

THE PARADOX OF POETRY

THE WELL-WROUGHT URN : STUDIES IN THE STRUCTURE OF POETRY. By Cleanth Brooks. *Dennis Dobson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

MR. BROOKS represents a school of criticism, which has been influential both in England and America, and which owed its original impulse to the work of Mr. Eliot, and especially to his rediscovery of Donne and the other Metaphysical poets. This criticism is intellectual in its approach, concerned with an analysis of the poet's language and imagery. It is especially on the alert for what the poet may communicate obliquely, by the exercise of wit, by deliberate or unconscious ambiguities, and by literary echoes and psychological overtones. Mr. Brooks, indeed, sees irony and paradox, in the widest

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sense of those words, as the essential characteristics of poetry, not only in an obviously intellectual and witty poet such as Donne, but also in so apparently straightforward a writer as Wordsworth. For him, the poem must be read, not as we might approach a prose document, but as a self-consistent work of art, a "well-wrought urn", bound together into a particular unity by its own characteristic imagery, no less than by its overt subject-matter.

Such critics have tended, perhaps, in the past, to overstress the importance of the Metaphysicals, and of certain modern poets, as against the tradition of Milton, the Augustans, the Romantics and the Victorians, which for most readers, represents the norm of English poetry. It is the merit of Mr. Brooks' book that he extends his appreciation to poets of widely differing schools and periods, and thus goes far towards restoring a more balanced and catholic approach. He chooses for his analysis well-known poems by Donne, Shakespeare, Milton, Herrick, Pope, Gray, Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson, and W. B. Yeats, and succeeds in throwing fresh light on each of them. Thus, in the case of *Macbeth*, he shows how the total effect of the play's imagery serves to illuminate particular phrases —"Pity like a naked new-born babe," or the daggers "breeched in gore". In Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* he detects a pervading use of images connected with light, which constitute a system of symbolism dominating both poems. Complexity and obliqueness are shown to be characteristics not confined only to modern poetry. Even so universal and apparently simple a poem as Gray's *Elegy* is seen to depend for its effect largely upon its deliberate use of quotations and echoes of earlier works, no less than does Mr. Eliot's *Waste Land*. Mr. Brooks' comparison between Yeats's *Among School-Children* with Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimation of Immortality* is particularly instructive. The general thesis of these studies leads Mr. Brooks to an intelligent discussion of the philosophical problems raised by a consideration of the nature of poetic communication, and of the conflicts between a relativist and absolutist view of critical standards. There can be few lovers of poetry who will not find that this book sheds fresh light on poems which had tended to become, perhaps, almost staled for him by familiarity.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS.

A PROVOCATIVE BIOGRAPHY

THE PARADOX OF OSCAR WILDE. By George Woodcock. *T. V. Boardman.* 15*s.*

"SHERARD," Wilde protested, "you are defending us at the risk of our lives". Had Mr. Woodcock, whose championship now threatens Wilde's reputation, learned the lesson contained in Wilde's story of the inventor who, having persuaded millionaires to make his fortune, so grossly overstated the case for his contrivance that they perforce abandoned him, he would have spared himself the writing of this long and solemn apologia, in which all that is sound is stated or implied in Hesketh Pearson's biography. Wilde was an individualist, as every artist must be: to pretend that he was therefore the creator of an influential philosophy of "Individualism" is to protest too much. Wilde, the friend of Stewart Headlam, William Morris, Cunninghame Graham, would have picked up the smattering of Socialism he required to misrepresent it in "*The Soul of Man under Socialism*", but the work most characteristic of him does not represent a protest against "the world he had to face", which was "so horrible" as to compel him to seek refuge in fantasy or "to repel it with a jest". "Bernard Shaw gained much from imitating Wilde's technique of delivering a whole profound thought in a single phrase" (as if Wilde invented what Shakespeare had already perfected); but "had Wilde lived and continued to write for the theatre, there is no doubt that Shaw's prestige would never

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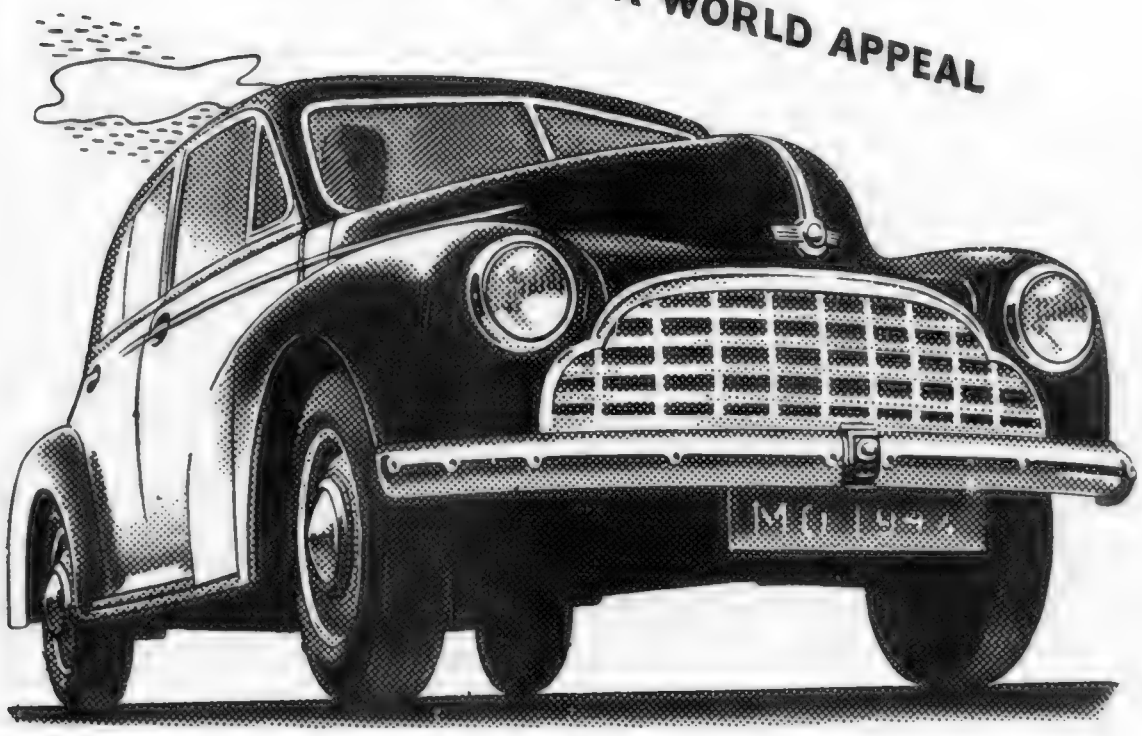

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have reached its present magnitude". The extravagant ineptitude of such assertion is in keeping with the tautological (e.g. "aesthetic beauty") over emphasis that permeates the book.

BASIL HARVEY

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS: VOLUME II. By W. H. Gardner. *Secker and Warburg*. 30s.

THE second volume of Dr. Gardner's commentary on Gerard Manley Hopkins completes a work of remarkable scholarship and sensibility. Dr. Gardner begins with a biographical introduction which is concerned mainly with Hopkins's literary and personal contacts. Part I of the volume, entitled "Tradition and Innovation", discusses the Early Poems, the New Rhythm and Hopkins as reader and critic. Part II, "Maturity and Achievement", discusses the poems after "The Wreck of the Deutschland". An Epilogue attempts a general valuation of Hopkins and the Appendices deal with his music and other topics.

The commentary is so rich in prosodical, classical, Celtic and other learning, that it is difficult to pick out any one aspect for special commendation. Perhaps the best praise one can give it is to say that it does immensely increase the pleasure of reading the poems it elucidates. There is no piling up of irrelevant erudition. Everything is concentrated on the primary purpose of extending appreciation of a difficult poet by showing, often in his own words, what he was trying to do. For example, when discussing "Sprung Rhythm" Dr. Gardner traces it back to the Greek Metres, which Hopkins studied intensively when he was a Professor of Greek; next he shows the form it took in early English poetry and then goes on to illustrate the ways in which Hopkins adapted it to his own purposes and estimates the degree of his success. His sub-title, "A Study of Poetic Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition", accurately summarizes his approach.

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THE DIVINE SARAH

SARAH BERNHARDT—MY GRANDMOTHER. By Lysiane Bernhardt. Translated by Vyvyan Holland. *Hurst and Blackett*. 21s.

THERE are people whose private lives blaze as dramatically as though behind footlights; it is claimed that the Great Mysteries defy verbal definition. For these two reasons alone, Lysiane Bernhardt faced a considerable problem in writing the biography of her grandmother, the Divine Sarah, since she endeavours to play down the sensational, to dowse the immortal flamboyance and show a domestic and motherly actress forced into unsought notoriety. Of course she does not want to succeed fully and her method of fictionalized biography, always and rightly suspect, naturally heightens the vivid and fantastic story.

Nearly all her facts are at second and third hand and the book is rather like a palimpsest. One wonders how deep to scratch after the truth and how much, consciously, and unconsciously Sarah suppressed and glossed, and in turn, how completely Lysiane captured the essence as well as the details of the facts.

Though alas, I never saw her, Ellen Terry's has always seemed as though it must be the perfect description of Bernhardt: "She was as transparent as an azalea, only more so; like a cloud, only not so thick. Smoke from a burning paper describes her more nearly! . . . Her body was not the prison of her soul, but its shadow."

Perhaps no one close to her could see her on this level; it remains for an impersonal biographer to utilize not only Sarah's own book but this readable and copiously illustrated biography. It leaves Sarah no less Divine and mythical, no less exotic and scarcely less elusive. Which is all as it should be.

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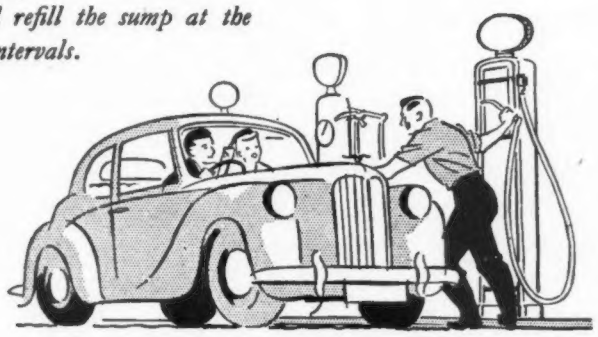

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THE LOW VIEW

YEARS OF WRATH: A CARTOON HISTORY, 1932-1945. By David Low. *Victor Gollancz.* 25*s.*

LOW is without question the most skilful of living cartoonists. His supple line, derived from the brushwork of Japanese art, is highly expressive and decorative. His point of view, particularly in domestic politics, is often repulsive to many who admire his art and he is hopelessly out of his depth with the institutions and traditions of the country of his adoption. He nevertheless, commands a large following of readers of the Right Wing *Evening Standard* where his work is usually at variance with the views expressed in the adjoining leading article. This is regarded in some quarters as evidence of the broad-mindedness of the proprietor of that journal.

This collection of nearly three hundred of Low's published cartoons covers the period, May 1932 to the Nuremburg War Trials of 1945. The book is furnished by the artist with a preface which is unexpectedly urbane in tone and disarming in intention. Each cartoon carries an explanatory paragraph to assist the forgetful to recall its occasion. The publisher's claim that "this is one of the few 'history books' that have a real chance of immortality" is extravagant. History is something more than day-to-day comment on events and is seldom achieved at red-heat, a temperature which is felt in every line drawn by this artist.

A political cartoonist must have decided views, not to say a strong dash of prejudice. Low lacks neither of these *desiderata.* Where he fails as a reliable commentator is in the violence of his political prejudice. His caricatures of Mr. Neville Chamberlain are brilliantly bitter and as grossly injust. He does something, though tardily, to soften this in his preface where he says, "Time almost certainly will modify judgment on Chamberlain whose fault was not that he lacked virtue but that he was wrong". The cartoons on pages 59 and 61 were designed to belittle and disparage in the eyes of his own countrymen, a Prime Minister who was striving against odds to avert the carnage of the years to come. Time, if not concerned with more pressing affairs, may not be as kind to Low himself in this matter.

Low's sympathies are not far to seek. That sentimental phantasy "The Worker" exercises a profound influence upon him but his respect for Communist Russia has suffered some decline in recent years. The first sign of this was in his masterly cartoon of 20th September, 1939 (p. 90), where Hitler and Stalin greet each other with savage irony over the prostrate body of the raped and ravaged Poland. Less successful is the cartoon on page 281. This shows a Russian soldier eagerly congratulating a British and an American soldier on the occasion of the D. Day landings in Normandy. The artist's note on this fanciful scene, after quoting an extract from a laudatory speech by Stalin, includes the following "... This lead showed the Allies in a new light to the Russian people who had never appreciated the difficulties of making a full-scale invasion from the sea." It was, unhappily, a light that was very soon extinguished, if indeed it ever glimmered.

Of Low's now almost legendary figure, Colonel Blimp, the most charitable judgment is that it is a class-conscious misconception emanating from the mind of one whose knowledge of soldiering is hardly first hand. Colonel Blimp is a dummy, stuffed with sawdust that it might the more readily be bayonetted by Low's jabbing brush. It is regrettable that this puppet should have misled unthinking readers into believing that it had any basis in fact. Blimp as an individual may be found even to-day in Piccadilly Clubs or on the Committees of Trades Unions. What is false is that he is either general or influential. He was and is a convenient cock-shy at which to direct the blame for our own mistakes and shortcomings. And that is a pointless pastime.

Low's cartoons are valueless as historical

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records. They are of great interest to students of vigorous and inventive draughtsmanship. They will, moreover, certainly be referred to by those who seek to assess the varying trends of opinion which prevailed during the years covered by this book.

SYDNEY J. MAIDEN.

THE LABYRINTH

THE LABYRINTH. Poems by Edwin Muir. *Faber and Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

IT is hard to understand why Mr. Muir is said to "stand outside the main stream of English Literature". He seems to me, in the highest sense, derivative. For a poet so familiar with foreign work, he is wonderfully faithful to the best traditions of our poetry; from the ethereal simplicities of Vaughan and Traherne down to the resolved quiet of Eliot's "Gerention". Even the Saxon "Dream of the Rood" is echoed at the close of Mr. Muir's "Transfiguration", when—

> "the tormented wood
> Will cure its hurt and grow into a tree
> In a green springing corner of young Eden."

These poems are impressive for their true lyric power, and the freer metres and the more effective because the poet proves repeatedly that he understands the discipline of verse form, and can write a beautifully iambic. Perhaps there is no need for so much repetition of single words. The meaning is seldom in need of emphasis; and this particular mannerism, where it is not musically essential, gives a false impression of verbal poverty.

Poetical metaphysics are like the child in the nursery rhyme. When they are good they are very very good, and when they are bad they are horrid. Too often desire outruns performance, and the poet's grasp exceeds his reach. In these poems, however, Mr. Muir concerns himself in mature and justified confidence with the only theme for the consummate artist in any medium: the spirit's dissatisfaction with the material and transitory, and its awareness of a more congenial habitation.

> "And yet this is a land, and we say 'Now',
> Say 'now' and 'here' and are in our own house."

V. R. COOTE.

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